A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION
No.20 DECEMBER 1986
£1

ZZAP! 64

MONTHLY REVIEW FOR COMMODORE SOFTWARE



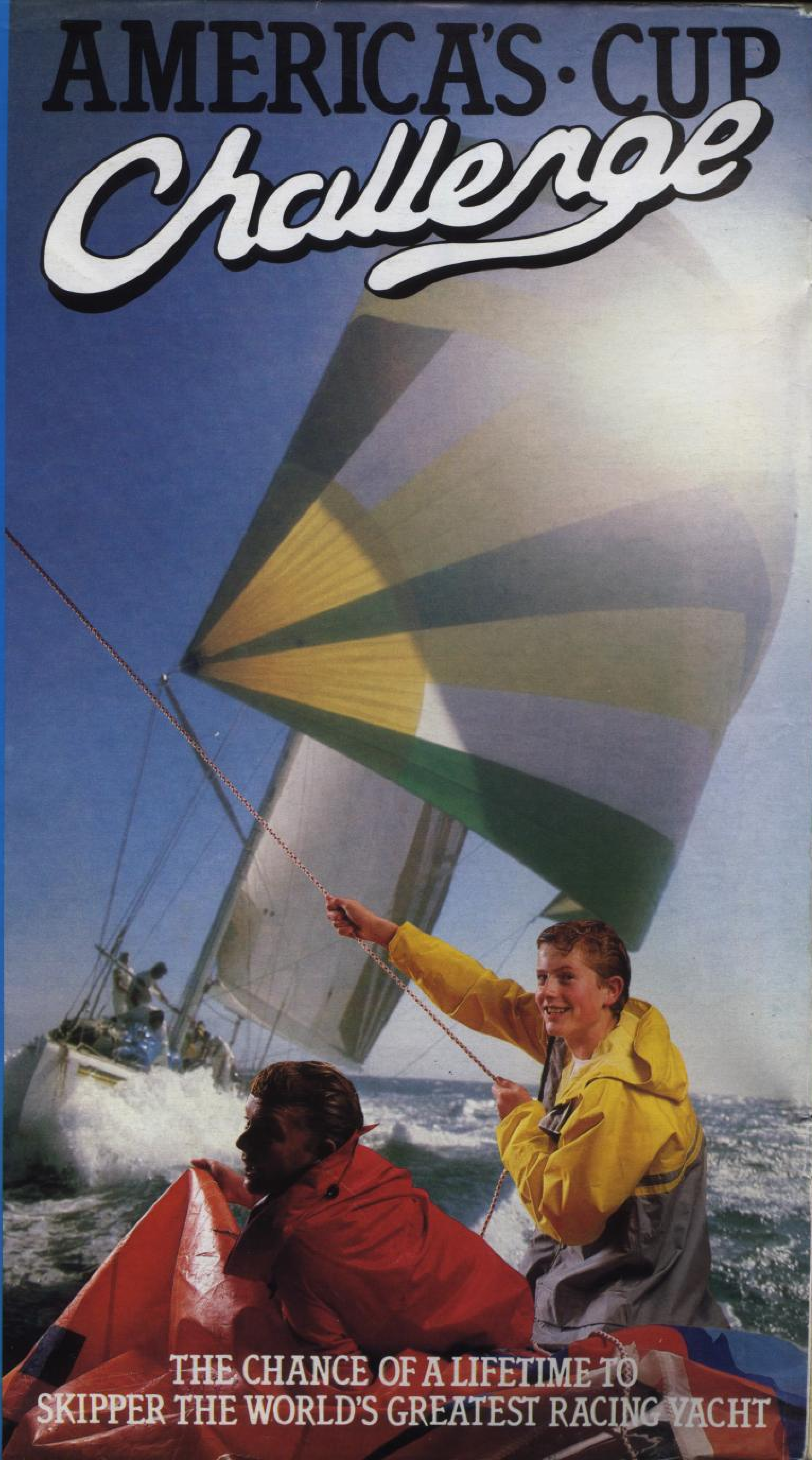
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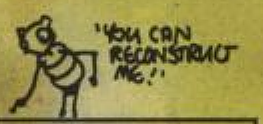
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ISSUE 20 DECEMBER 1986



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A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION

ABC

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JAN-JUN 1986
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UK: 54,399

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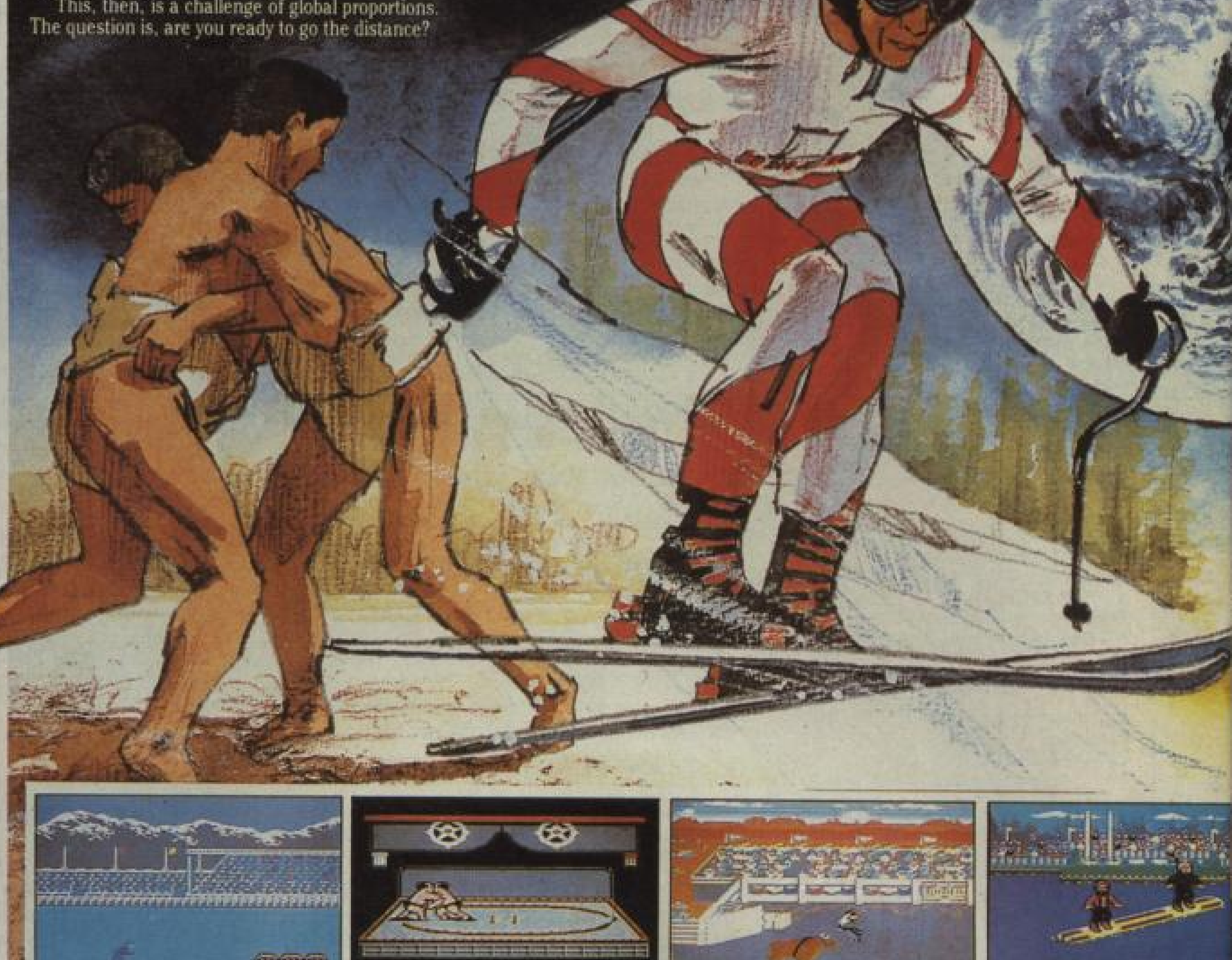
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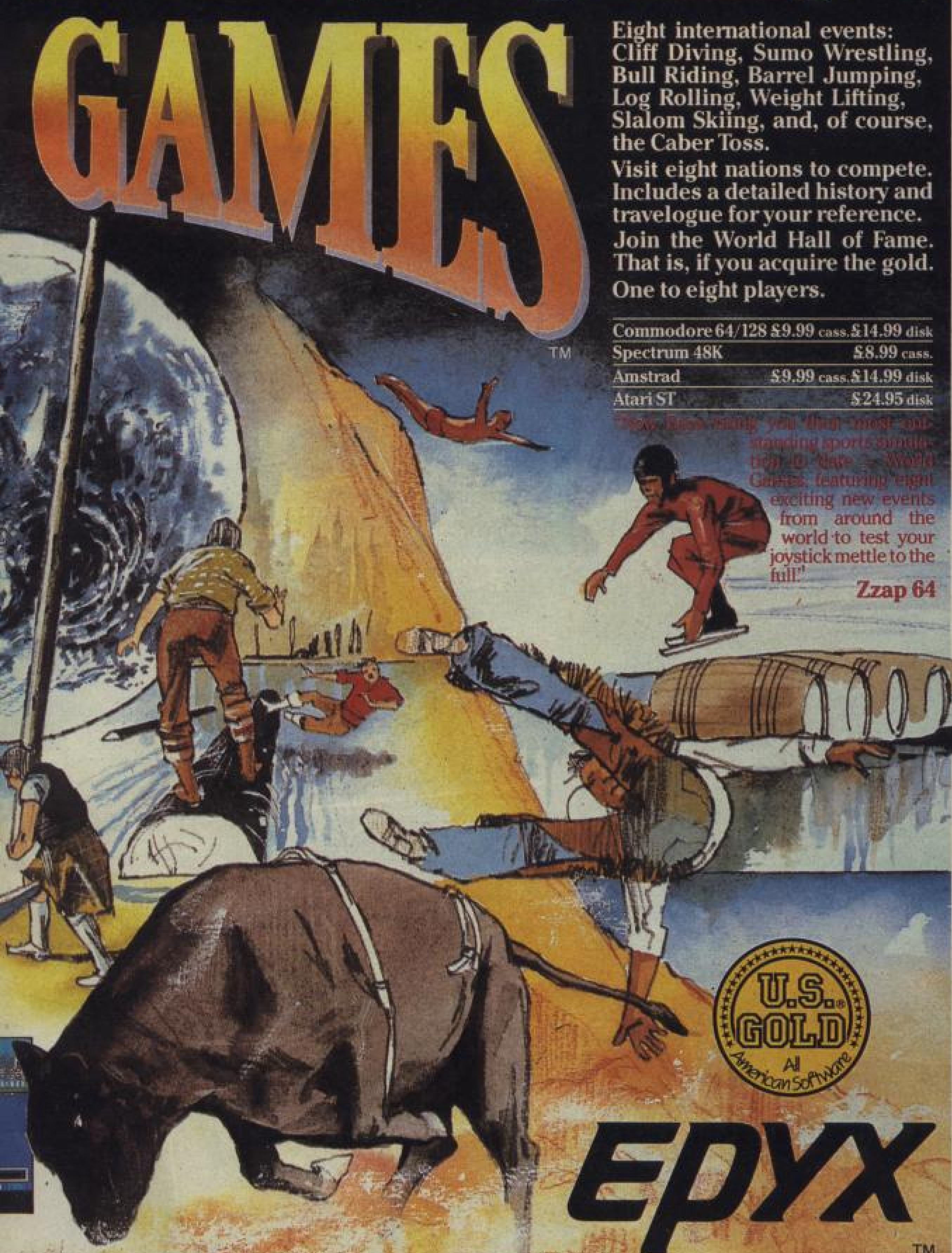
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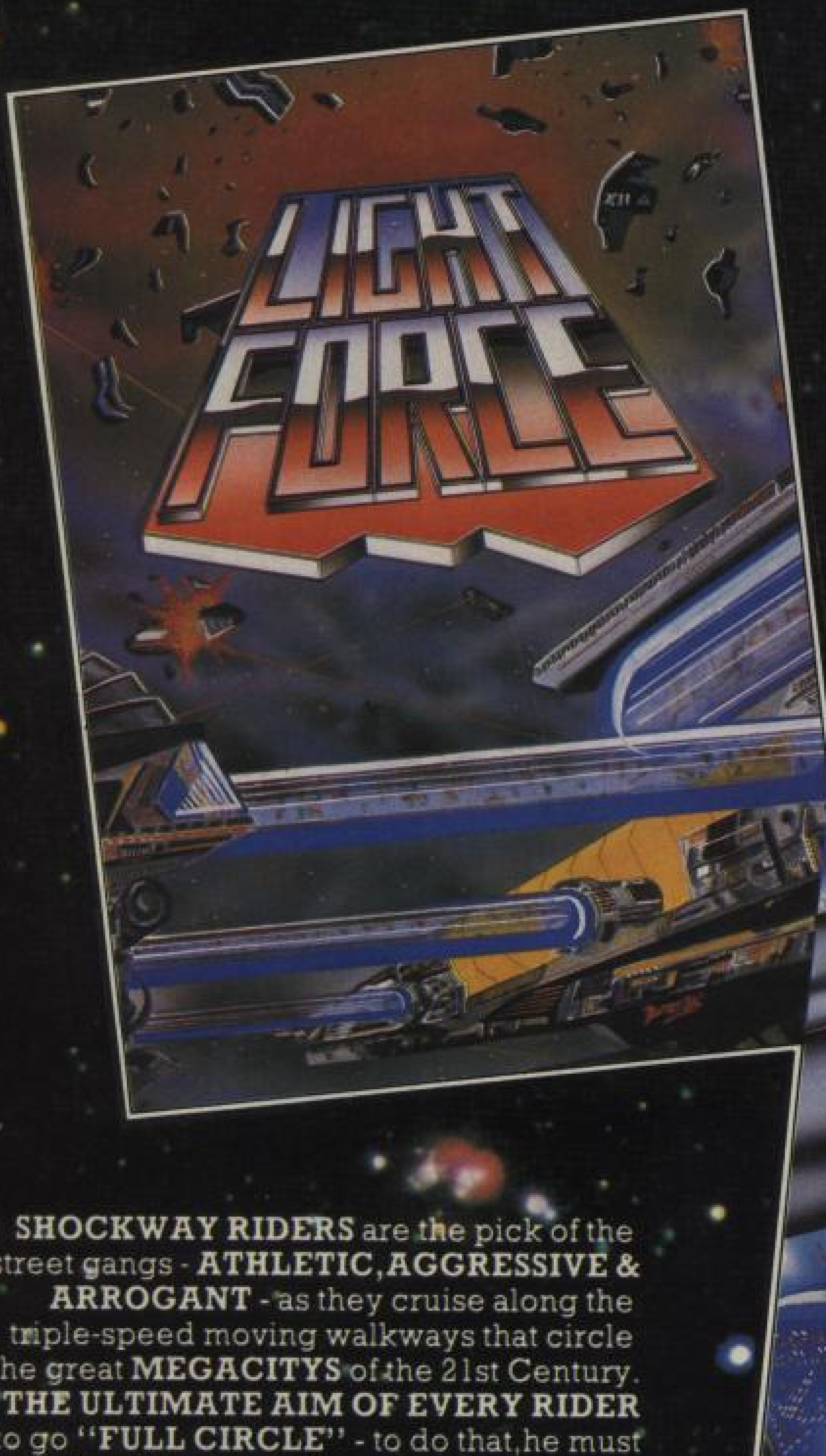
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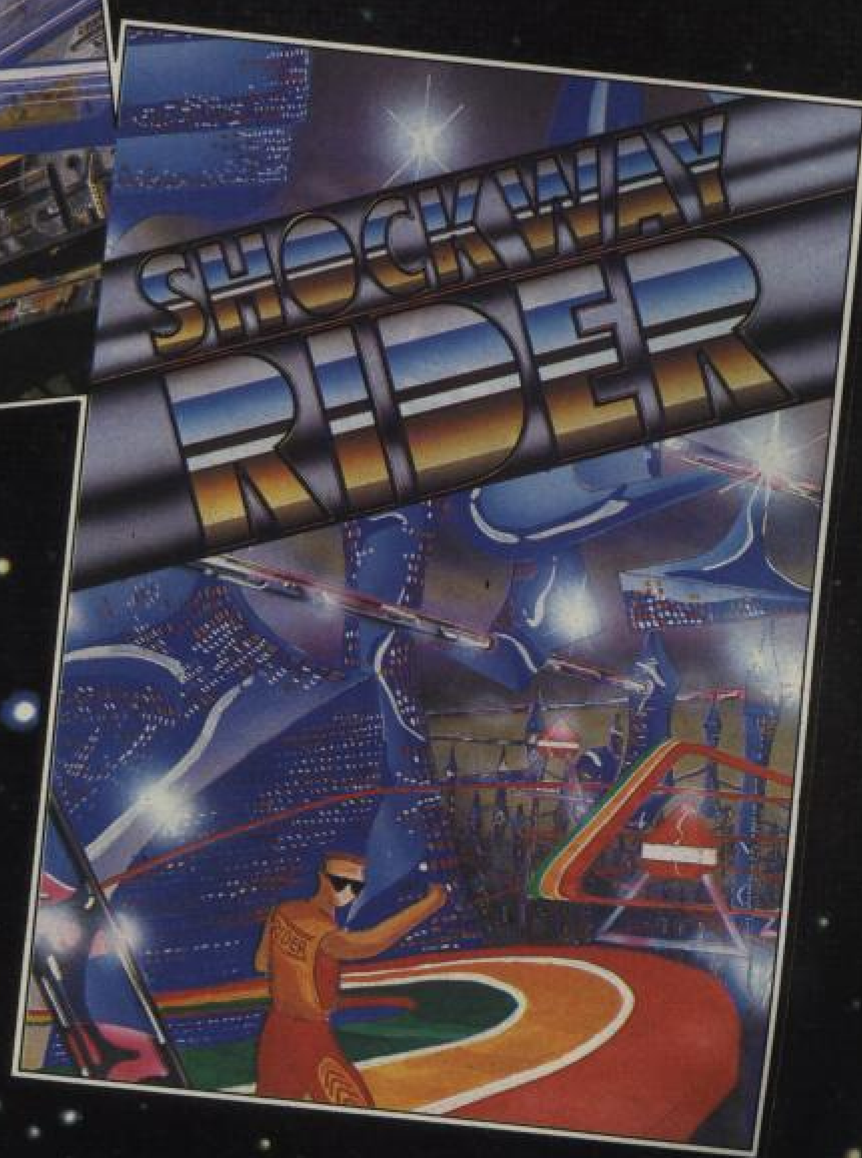
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ZZAP! ED



(. . . I also buy Zzap!, but I really hate reading it . . .)
Careful with that axe, Eugene . . .
(. . . I burnt it with the compost from the garden . . .)
Careful with that axe, Eugene . . .
(. . . Zzap always goes for gross covers . . .)

CAREFUL WITH THAT AXE, EUGENE!





As you may have noticed (unless you always turn to this page first), this issue of ZZAP! has undergone minor cosmetic surgery. We thought it was time we made a few changes, so this 'new look' will develop over the next month or two into a full face lift (no jokes about dimples or beards, please).

The biggest change of this month however, is the departure of Sean Masterson, who has hung up his well-worn helmet and is leaving to fight his battles on pastures new (in a corner of some foreign field that is forever England). Sean joined ZZAP! in August of last year and soon proved his worth on the Strategy front with his vast wargaming experience. Despite being constantly jibed about his diminutive size, he frequently contributed to various reviews and features — most notably the Infocom and Datasoft interviews. But now he's gone (sniff). So, as of next month we won't have a strategy column — but don't depair, we're working on the problem even as I write.

Hopefully these small changes won't affect your enjoyment of this Liddonesque (that's B-I-G for the uninitiated) December issue, full of well-crucial competitions and exclusive reviews and previews of new software (I won't bore you with trite details about how many as-yet-unreviewed games we've got in this issue). And next issue will be bigger and better still! (See page 71 for details). With that said, I shall depart. See you next month

Gary Penn





ADVERTISERS' INDEX

GAMES REVIEWED

THE MONTHLY SOFTWARE STAR FOR YOUR US GOLD CALENDAR





ZZAP! RRAP

Hello, Lloyd Mangram here with another peripatetic circus of tongue-lashing, masticating and generally wonderful load of epistles. As I write Dick Eddy and Gary Penn are arguing over what sort of Christmas decorations to hang in the offices (well it is mid-October). The minimalist school (led by Julian Rignall) tend towards spending the slender budget on Harpic (see letter later), while the Eddy/Penn purple prose school want Regent Street. Me, I'll be happy if I just get a Christmas card . . .

As to letter of the month and that all-encompassing £20 worth of software, this month it's going to a lady writer (or a chapess as the comps minion might so-disrespectfully say).

THE GATHERCOAL BACKLASH

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Dear ZZAP!
This letter concerns that newspaper clipping from the Canberra Times (October issue, ZZAP! Ed). I cannot believe that Mr Gathercoal can be so narrow-minded.

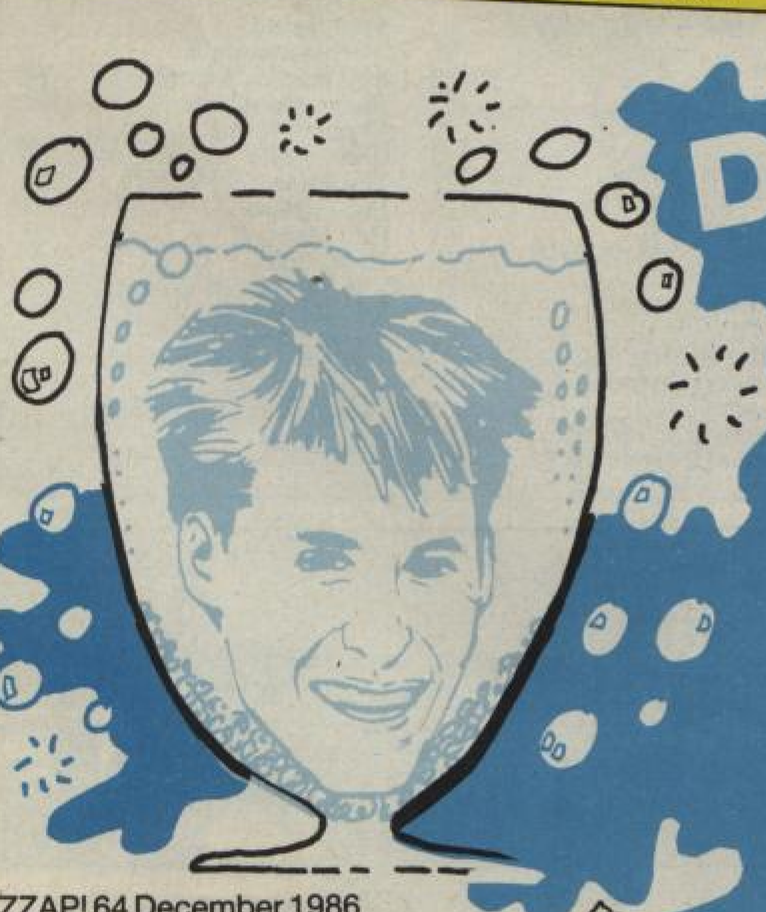
It is not the fact that he says 'Computer games promote violence', but that he thinks that, 'Computer games are rivalling video nasties'! I honestly fail to see how they could be. Computer games may seem violent at times (especially when the object is to kill everyone in sight) but, let's face it, usually when you kill someone, all that occurs is that they disappear in a cloud of smoke. When was the last time you saw a computer game that showed human entrails splattered all over the wall as so many of the current video nasties do? Even if a computer game did show such things, it could hardly be called as bad, computer graphics are surely not as life-like?

It seems to me that it is not the 'humble video game' which is having adverse effects on children, but the video nasties. The trouble is that although videos may have an '18' certificate on them, children are still able to watch them. Why? Because irresponsible parents take out the film for them, and let them watch it. Of course, when their child starts to show signs of violence etc, they cannot blame the videos, because that would mean it was their own fault. Instead they blame computer games, proclaiming their innocence as to the content of the game.

It sounds to me like Mr Gathercoal is simply gathering wool and making a big name for himself.

Well, you have my views, I expect that quite a few readers will agree with me.
Michelle Peters, Sevenoaks, Kent

A nail squarely hit on the head, I think Michelle. Parents are only human (I expect Gathermole himself is a human, possibly even a parent), and us humans have a tendency to pass the buck whenever possible, especially when it comes to apportioning blame for 'little Johnny's' violent behaviour.
LM



DANGEROUS

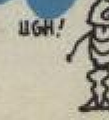
Dear ZZAP!
I find it hard to believe that a magazine of your quality would print such statements in the Scorelord's section surely you realise young people who read your mag, and may well try something very very (I stress) dangerous! Of course, you don't know what I'm talking about so here:

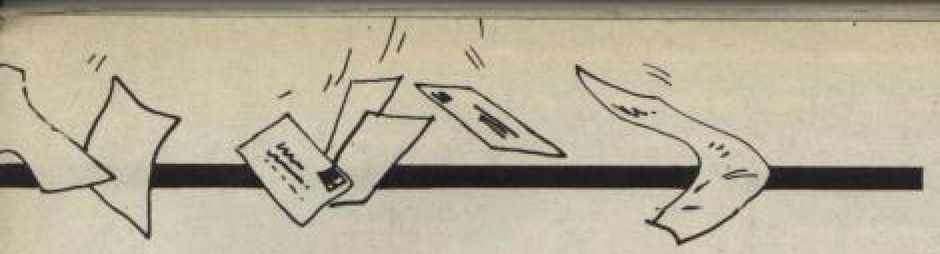
ZZAP! Issue 14 challenge: 'I toy with the idea of adding the last drops of Domestos from the BLUE bottle.' You would not toy, would you idiot, you would probably die!

ZZAP! issue 17 (latest) Challenge: 'I reached for my container, poured myself some extra thick Harpic.' 'Pouring my third Harpic I settled back . . .'

It's comments like this that make you go down in likeness. Please stress this very carefully.
Simon Aylett, Cheshunt, Herts

You're probably correct Simon. As they say at the end of so many TV Circus/Variety programmes — 'please do not try copying the high-wire act as seen performed by the Inveterate Fliers in this programme as it can prove very dangerous to the inexperienced.'
LM





A COMP-UP

Dear Lloyd,
GALCORP one month and LAUGH the next. Poor comps minion, I think having to work in a broom-cupboard has finally got to him. But please don't sack him for these unforgivable mistakes as this would probably finish him off.
Andrew Cleal, Furnace Green, Crawley, Sussex

Laugh was there? It was bent a bit, that's all.
LM



A READER ON HIS HIGH COMMODE

Dear ZZAP!
I'm shocked at the letters you print criticising *Commodore User* magazine. I'm happy to settle for buying both magazines. The people who write in saying these things must buy *Commodore User* if so why? *Commodore User* may not sell as many as ZZAP! but it's just as good. From now on ZZAP! 64 must stop printing these silly letters because I think that ZZAP! readers are jealous because *Commodore User* are first for reviews and maps in most cases. Here are my ratings of the computer mags.

ZZAP! 64 V COMMODORE USER

	ZZAP!	CBM User
Presentation	98%	95%
Reviews	95%	97%
Hints and Tips	90%	90%
Previews	92%	98%
Adventure	95%	97%
Other News	92%	95%
Value	97%	90%
Overall	94%	97%

Note: ZZAP! sometimes is childish and reviews are too much waffle not fact. *CU* is better and well put together.
Anonymous, Belfast, N Ireland

I've got to hand at least a couple more letters on the same subject but with different views (probably prompted by the sudden rash of anti-ZZAP! letters in last month's CU (getting your own back for having to peel all those stickers off the PCW stand, eh Eugene)?).

'Waffle not fact', seems patently unfair criticism, and as for being first with reviews — just check your facts my dear Anonymous. (Is that an Irish name)?

Here's another letter on the same subject ... .
LM

Dear Lloyd,
Most days of the year are spent waiting impatiently for the next fabulous issue of ZZAP! 64. To pass the days away I decided to try and remedy the waiting by buying another computer magazine, namely *Commodore User*. I was disgraced by the amount of slagging off ZZAP! 64 received from its own or ex-readers. Comments such as 'I read ZZAP! 64 and hated it so much I burnt it with the compost from the garden' or 'When Mike Pattenden sees that other fool Gary Penn does he push him under a 10 ton lorry or offer him a free subscription to *Commodore User*?'.

Personally I'd go for the lorry. Unlike ZZAP! who try to cut out magazine/computer slagging off matches, this letter was answered by the following statement: 'We don't see a lot of the ZZAP! 64 team, but we know they're avid readers of *CU*, how else would they stay in touch?'

What a load of rubbish, most reviews in ZZAP! are the first seen for that game. It is this sort of slagging off that causes people to stop buying magazines.
Andrew Gosling, Longridge, Preston, Lancs

Thanks for the compliments, Andrew, and we'll try and keep the 'slagging' to a human minimum!
LM

ZZAP! RRAP

MANCHESTER A DISAPPOINTMENT

Dear Lloyd,
I have never felt the need to write to ZZAP! Rrap before but! . . . after visiting the 8th Commodore show in Manchester I have been urged to put pen to paper. Oh Dear! What a disaster, 43 stands, abysmal. And what's more no ZZAP! 64/Newsfield. That was the straw that broke the camel's back! It ruined my day. After visiting the 7th in London, I was stunned, I just had to go to the next.

When I saw the advert for the 8th I filled in the form instantly, posted it and informed all my friends who were so anxious to go after I told them how mega it was. They were so disappointed they've deserted me.

Back to the show now, when you went in you were greeted by two fit birds 'selling' the program (in May it was free). The thickness of it, or should I say thinness, 18 pages, most adverts, for 30p you could tell it was going to be crap!

Now I have got that off my chest I feel a bit better.

I hope to see you at the 9th show, (with the stands, and the program, b/w photostat (1 side) for 80p) but I do hope it is a lot better.

Keep up the good work lads.
Mike Robertson, Formby, Merseyside

ZZAP! didn't attend because it came too soon after the somewhat exhausting week-long PCW Show. I'm sorry to hear it was disappointing after the 7th Commodore Show, which was certainly a huge success, though low on stands. The 9th promises to be much better — I hope.
LM

MISSED OUT

Dear Lloyd,
I'm very sorry to have to do this, but after 18 months of loyal readership I feel I must complain.

At the PCW show this year I visited the Newsfield stand, only to find that the magazine I wanted had sold out. I noted plenty of CRASH and AMTIX, but no ZZAP! 64. This is, quite simply not good enough, and I feel that all of us who were unable to buy our copies deserve some kind of explanation.

Anyway, moaning aside, I do wish all the stupid twits who say ZZAP! is on th decline would SHUT UP.
Simon Purse, London, SW19

It was a bit unfortunate, Simon. They only took some 800 copies along because, due to some earlier clerical error, the issue was under-printed by several thousand copies. 800 was all that was available. The previous year saw nearly 2,000 copies sold. Sorry.
LM

CONFUSED? YOU WILL BE . . .

Dear Lloyd,
After my last silly letter, which was not printed (thank God) I have come to my senses and realised how easy it is to make jokes and say stupid things about ZZAP! reviewers. It's a lot harder to write a constructive sensible letter making interesting comments which other people can follow up with other letters.

My point is about two magazines, but I expect is true of others. The story starts when I read my new copy of ZZAP! What do I find? *Beyond Forbidden Forest* sizzles at 91%. '*Beyond FF* is a brill game, one which makes me proud to own a C64.' Oh good I think, I might get that. Then I read the *Iridis Alpha* review — sizzler 95%. 'Another stunning and innovative release which earns itself the position of the best shoot em up on the 64 to date.'

Ah, must think about buying that. Then *Miami Vice* review — 30% ' . . . who wants to pay £9 for music and nothing else?' Must avoid that.

Now I have just bought *C&VG* (no complaining I like to see what is happening on other micros). I turn to the *Beyond FF* review. Average mark 3.75 out of 10. 'This game will probably only appeal to those who like spending money on useless products.'

Oh dear, no good.

Iridis Alpha review average mark 7 out of 10, but only 5 for playability. 'You control what is known as a Gilby Robot Fighter. That much is clear. Little else is.'

Oh dear dear.

Then *Miami Vice*. Average 8.25 out of 10. 'It isn't a mega-game, but it is a good program, professionally put together and fun to play.'

Ah, might buy that.

Now, I don't want any of you moaning that *C&VG* doesn't review games well enough or anything like that. It maybe true, but that isn't the point. If I had read just *C&VG* I might have got *Miami Vice* and not the other two. If I only read ZZAP! I would have bought *Beyond FF* and *Iridis Alpha* and not *Miami Vice*. Now I am not going to say which I am going to buy or which magazine I prefer but I will say this.

It is the person's opinion that counts when he buys a game. I know you can't try out games in your average Boots, but small local shops allow you to do this. I think it is vital that we are allowed to try out games to choose ourselves.

Many of my friends always buy your Sizzlers and Gold Medals and are nearly always pleased, but quite a few times they think the game is boring or slow etc. I think WH Smith and Boots should pull their socks up and let us try games. £10 is a lot for 2 hours of play and then nothing.

Oh and don't moan that mags do agree on some games, I know they do, but it isn't all the time.

I rest my case.
James Jopling, West Wickham, Kent

I certainly agree — shops should allow would-be purchasers to try a game. Once upon a time you could always listen to a record in a shop before buying. That became largely redundant with pop radio giving music airplay time. The same isn't true of computer games.

As to the differing views between magazines, obviously a degree of personal taste enters into a review, but more to the point, it is the enthusiasm of the reviewers for the medium in which they work that colours the quality of what is said. I requote your quote: 'You control what is known as a Gilby Robot Fighter. That much is clear. Little else is' . . .

Oh dear. Oh dear indeed — this just goes to show the extent to which C&VG must have played the game. And bear in mind, that considering the 'brush up' ZZAP! reviewers had with Jeff Minter of some moons ago, you could argue that they had an emotional reason for being unfair over Iridis Alpha.
LM


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A GRAPHIC LLOYD

Dear Lloyd,
As nobody outside of ZZAP! Towers has ever seen your bulbous/slim figure, we decided to produce a few images of what we think you look like.
SB Hobdell and Ossie, Mildenhall, Suffolk

I think I like the one of me and my (wot's this 'weeds' bit?) flowers for Clair Hirsch best.
LM



PRISONER FREED

Dear Lloyd,
I'm writing to your magazine in SHOCK AND HORROR! I'm writing with reference to your competition section, where R Todd won the 'Electric Dreams' competition.

The game that he supposedly created, was created by a team of people who made the series *The Prisoner*, which was originally shown on ITV some twenty years ago. It was re-shown recently on Channel 4.

Can you please tell me whether you'll be cancelling the prize and rapping his knuckles for copying an original game?

Can you please tell me whether you will be catering for the 128; a straight YES or NO please.

Is it possible to send taped messages to you instead of writing long letters?

Peter Dudley, Mitcham, Surrey

128: I thought I (or we) had given a straight answer in previous issues (how's that for avoiding an issue)? Taped letters are a nuisance frankly. Finally, you weren't the only reader to spot R Todd's game's provenance, Peter. The next writer has a slightly different opinion though . . .
LM

Dear Lloyd,
I was appalled to see that your 'Design a Game' competition was won by someone who had copied his entry from the late 1960's TV series *The Prisoner* re-broadcast in 1983. The version depicted in ZZAP! issue 18 is identical, and also bootlegged. Nevertheless, *Kosha* will still be an excellent computer game, even if unoriginal.

James Radford, Ilkeston, Derbyshire

I think I'll have to see the finished product before commenting further on this one, other than to say that many games are derivatives of other and older ideas. It's the actual gameplay elements that make something feel new.
LM

GLOSSING OVER

Dear ZZAP!
Mag is brill, but enough of praise because your reviews are starting to annoy me. In the last few months I have noticed faults in your reviewing.

Firstly, the simulations such as *Summer Games, Winter Games, Hyper Sports* etc, have been given far too large a lastability rating, in my opinion something that keeps interest for only a couple of weeks should not be in the 90% range.

On high rated games average type music is given higher ratings than it should be.

But the game that has really pointed this out to me is the review of *International Karate* which I recently bought. Most of the ratings were correctly high though Penn claiming the graphics made *Fist* look crude is ridiculous, they are better but it would take an Amiga to make *Fist* look crude. What really bugs me though is PRESENTATION 94% this has been glossed over to match with the other marks.

For 94% we get: No pause game! No select player level. You have to get up from your comfy position to press ruddy F1 every time instead of pressing fire but of course we do get lots of 'cute touches'.

So come one ZZAP! give us the true facts about the game and don't gloss over bad points just because the rest of the game is so good.

Stephen Maloney, Tamworth, Staffs

I'm afraid to say that the egregious Penn still considers the graphics in Exploding Fist *to be crude, slow and jerky by comparison. He says IK is smooth and fast and contains more frames of animation. Presentation 'glossed over'! (he exclaims scornfully) — don't be silly, the use of joystick has to be taken into consideration and in IK the moves are more logically accessable from the joystick than in* Exploding Fist.

A select player level: the object of the game is to progress as far as possible — what's the point in allowing you to start on a high level, eh? And what's wrong with 'cute touches'? In the case of IK they made it all more interesting to watch and play— well, at least we thought so. So says GP.
LM



GOSH WOWERY

Dear Lloyd,
ZZAP! has been going for one and a half years now, so as I have every issue so far published, I thought I would write and comment on your magazine.

1. The Name: Personally, I like the name ZZAP! It follows suite with CRASH. What did disappoint me was AMTIX! I was expecting something like 'Pow' or 'Blam'.
2. The Price: Well done! You have kept the magazine going at a sensible price. Something most magazines fail to do. No doubt ZZAP! will go up after Christmas, but then that's the Conservative Party for you.
3. The Cover: Congratulations to Oliver Frey. I haven't found a better artist this century.
4. Letters: I think I have to take the majority view that this section is getting out of hand. The last few issues have gone way OTT. Please try and control the letters.
5. Reviews: All the cynics who complain about the magazine going downhill; as far as I'm concerned it's still the best. Issue 1 does admittedly hold the record for review pages, but the quality hasn't changed.
6. Richard Eddy: A man with character. Being new, his ego hasn't inflated much. I can't stamp many of your reviewers with the title 'Mr Nice Guy', but Dicky certainly deserves it.
7. Compunet/Art Gallery. The compunet page can be boring, but recently with all the demos it's been quite interesting. Keep that standard up. The Art Gallery is great, another of the first things I turn to. Let's have no more people like Hacker Chris though.
8. Terminal Man. Fab! I don't see why it was so unpopular. Great storyline, great artwork. Perhaps it's something to do with the fact that I've just turned 12 . . .
9. Rockford, Thing, etc. Rockford was great at the beginning, making his witty comments but with the arrival of Thing the margin became a battlefield and terminally boring. But then came the 'nose on legs' (He's great; what's his name?), who seemed to break the whole thing up. Now the margin is back how it used to be; keep it that way.
10. Lloyd Mangram. Great! Although he sometimes comes up with a bad reply, Lloyd isn't really a bad sort . . .

Gordon Darroch, Horstead, Norwich

Actually, ZZAP! shouldn't have been named ZZAP! It was intended that the trio of computer titles should logically be named CRASH, BANG and WALLOP, but Chris Anderson (ZZAP!'s first editor) didn't quite go for it, and then that bunch over at Specialist Retail Press went and 'nicked' BANG from under our noses. A travesty of history no less.
LM

WE HAD HOVIS FOR TEA . . .

Dear Lloyd,
Computer games, eh? Gor 'blimey, I remember when I was a lad. Eagerly running up to the change counter and foisting over my pound note. Maniacally stuffing the 10 pees into my pockets and racing up the nearest escalator in the direction of the Selfridges toy department; with sweaty palms and my little heart racing with anticipation, and just one thing on my mind.

Sorry..? No I wasn't desperate for a toilet, you old cynic. I was actually off to play the arcade games.

Yes, there they were — tucked away, over in the corner of the department — right next to the giant orange (!) the entire focus of my youthful attentions. I could barely contain myself as I pushed myself through the gathering surrounding the machines and waited impatiently for my go.

Okay, the games were predominantly value as opposed to chip, operated. Okay, I admit they had black and white screens and sure the the graphics made *Space Invaders* look like the film *Tron*. And even if the people of the time were still loping about in flares, the point I'm making still remains. And that is that the games were inordinately playable. They captured the imagination and satisfied the instincts in a way that the computer games of today (and I'm not referring to the commercial arcades here) monotonously fail to do.

Who remembers that car race game where you chased another guy around a bird's-eye view of a race track, avoiding oil-slicks and being awarded ratings of rookie or pro etc? That was in the mid-Seventies, and it wasn't exactly technically spellbinding then. State-of-the-art electronically though it wasn't, heart-attacking playable it most certainly was. How many of today's Commodore games could confidently lay claim to that?

Out of the countless hundred/thousands, I'm sure that I could count the truly exceptional ones on the fingers of my right hand. (And I lost three of those in a freak nose-picking accident)!

So why is this? Why, though the Commodore is certainly technically capable, has there never been an even semi-competent, capturing-all-necessary-nuances, rendition of a game as elementary as even *Space Invaders*?

I'll tell you why. It's simply the inherent computer programmer/games designer set-up. It very rarely works. Just because someone is a binary genius with a flare for art, why should it follow that they should be equally prodigious when it comes to the relatively new, specialist area of TV games design?

Thrust and *Dropzone* came close. *Boulderdash* even closer.

Let's look at Andrew Braybrook for a minute. *Uridium* was well thought out, and technically rather gorgeous! But to play? Andrew Braybrook has got some very good ideas, but the computer implementation of these have still yet to capture the elusive essence of 'Addictivity'.

For starters, isn't it about time the software companies revised their attitude toward film/TV tie-ins and arcade conversions? Don't they realise that this particular horse they are flogging is very nearly dead? And that when it drops they will be sitting directly beneath it.

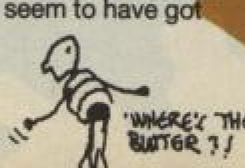
If I were to highlight an example of this particular misguided practice, the utter embodiment must be when Software Projects released a version of *Dragons Lair*. Why? The original's gameplay wasn't particularly stunning. So what were they trying to achieve by this? Perhaps they were confident that improvements could be made to the graphics or sound? How could they have dreamed of doing it justice?

If more stress was put into the analysis of games design, the infinite possibilities of this entertainment medium, whose surface in my opinion has barely been scratched, will be slowly realised. Programmers seem to have got bogged down by creating audio/visual demonstration pieces with their computers. And although this may all be very impressive, it's hardly likely that it will ever be a substitute for ITV now is it?

I would be interested in having the ZZAP! team's thoughts on the current software situation. For instance what 64 games of today do you believe compare 'addiction' wise, to the compulsion you may have experienced on games of old, such as *Donkey Kong* and *Defender* etc?

Mark Roberts, Ealing, London W5

Ah, THAT Mr Roberts again. As you will have noticed, I had to cut your 'interminably long' letter (your quotes). I hope you think I've done it sympathetically. I could answer that you're looking through the wrong end of a pair of binoculars with the rose tint of the past (and was there Hovis yet for tea . . . ?) but that would be a cheap quip although probably a fair one. A real answer is too long to go into here. Don't think I'm avoiding this one, but I really do feel it's worthy of a proper answer in the form of an article. Sorry, Gary — over to you for a future issue.
LM





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ZZAP! RRAP

RIGNALL IN BIG BANG

Dear ZZAP!
I see a certain publication calling itself a magazine has made some rather serious allegations against your Mr Rignall (ie: software piracy). I myself have bought the first few issues of it but I find it is fast transforming itself in to the computer equivalent of *The Sun*.

I was however surprised to see that your publishing exec, Graeme Kidd, is issuing a writ against them. Surely this will only give them more 'sensationalist' headlines and I feel he would have been better to treat the article with the contempt it deserved and ignored it. ZZAP! is far too superior to this publication and should not lower itself by engaging in petty slanging matches. It may have arrived with a bang but I am sure it will go out with a whimper.
T O'Byrne, Bank Top, Bolton

In fact, despite the headline over the article you mention in Bang, *Graeme Kidd did not issue a writ, but threatened action of some sort unless the unsupported allegations against Julian Rignall (and therefore Newsfield) were withdrawn. As I write, I am informed that the allegations of the un-named 'second software house' have been found to be completely without foundation. Since publication of the article, Newsfield and Specialist Retail Press (publishers of* Bang *have joined forces to investigate the whole matter of trade piracy, as reported in* Computer Trade Weekly.

Despite numerous rumours to the contrary circulating within the software industry and the public, Julian is hard at work doing an excellent job as a Newsfield journalist for ZZAP!

A RETAILER RIGHTS AGAIN

Dear Lloyd,
Thank you for publishing my last letter — I didn't think you would. It still seems to be stirring up one or two readers and has certainly made me grudgingly admire your good nature in facing a hail of criticism month after month. It seems to show that a lot of misunderstanding is caused by not reading articles or letters properly or in context. Still, it's a lot more interesting than the nauseatingly sychophantic faecal matter that used to infest your pages! (Isn't it?)

I still maintain that a reviewer's note of how long was spent playing a game is an effective measure of its appeal. Of course it is subjective, but so is everything else he says and at least time is a measurable quantity.

Old Classics: It might be interesting to see reviews of some all time classics from before the birth of ZZAP! For instance, I would rate *Gridrunner* as a classic shoot em up and *Jumpman* and *Loderunner* are probably the most playable platform games ever written. Today's graphics are wonderful, but the best of yesterday's playability is rarely surpassed. I wonder if your reviewers have ever seen *Ankh* from Beyond? It's fascinatingly different as have been most of Beyond's products. I wonder if anyone archives old computer games and whether any will become collectors items in years to come?

Joysticks: I appreciate these reviews very much and, in the main, agree with the findings. We try very hard to avoid selling sticks which are known to be of poor performance or durability. However, I do have one or two quibbles about September's tests: It might be useful to ask whether the Joyball is available with fire buttons on the left for right handed players, because it is ergonomically useless for right-handers as it is.

The same comment applies to the Wizard and, in addition, it should have been made clear that the Wizard doesn't actually have a stick at all. This is what makes it so difficult to use. I dislike the Pro Ace but, to be fair, it should have had higher marks for durability. If someone were to produce a really comfortable Comp Pro or Arcade we might, at last, have a stick deserving a 100% mark.

I largely agree with your 'Overall' marks but it would be interesting to know how they are derived, because they often seem to bear no mathematical relationship to the other marks. How about an (occasional) top ten readers' joystick table similar to the top 30 games? Finally, I should make the point that, although most manufacturers are using micro switches these days, the original Kempston Competition Pro (A superb stick) had leaf switches and it was very easy to fine tune the sensitivity to your personal requirements.

Compilations: Customers get extremely peeved if their full price games are released on a compilation, within weeks of purchase, at a vastly reduced price. In one case a game was actually released on compilation BEFORE it arrived as a single! Some dealers now refuse to stock them at all because the value of the singles can be reduced by up to 90% overnight. There is no doubt that compilations of current releases inhibit sales of singles and compilations alike through damage to customer and dealer confidence. Is it surprising?

PIRACY: I would love to know how many cartridge copiers have been sold. Does anyone in their right mind believe that anyone else in their right mind is going to spend £30 to £40 just to make personal backups of their own software? No matter what is stated as a token warning on the advertisements, it is certain that copy cartridges are used almost entirely for illegal purposes. And you guys happily fill your pages with advertisements for them and even fill the odd page or two describing how to use them! Transferring personal software from tape to disk is acceptable but the temptation is always there to 'Just make a copy for my friend(s)'. Some cartridges make copies that run only with the cartridge inserted and that just might be acceptable, but I seriously doubt whether many of that type sell when the freeloaders are so readily available.

Software houses who state that they are only after the commercial pirates must have their brains in their buttocks. One school kid can (and does) make say 10 copies and flog them to his mates for a quid. That pays for his game (two games if it was a ZZAP! special). If each of them repeats the process, then we have a hundred floating around. Just one more generation and there are a thousand and a fourth generation give TEN THOUSAND. Those figures are based on just ONE retail sale to ONE kid. The mind boggles at the potential numbers involved if a thousand kids make ten first generation copies thus producing ten thousand illegal copies in one fell swoop! Very few games retail anything like that number and those that do probably have 50,000 illegitimate brothers. Would you believe that one customer had the gall to bring in C2N blatantly complaining that it wouldn't load his pirated copies? Is it simply ignorance of the law or does no-one care about theft anymore?

Now where do the games come from? It should be from your local friendly dealers, of course. The best ones will keep good stocks, give advice, demo the game and may even give a discount to regular customers. But you can be sure that they have been losing money for months on software that doesn't sell and are sick to death of giving away tapes just to get rid of them. They will change to selling cheap business systems or go out of business altogether.

It is happening now.

'So what?' you say. Well, apart from the fact that you have lost your chance of seeing or trying before buying, if dealers don't buy games, then distributors won't be selling them and they are falling like skittles already. When they go bust, they usually owe a few software houses a small fortune and some of them go bust too. How long are intelligent programmers and software houses going to continue spending months of their lives devising ever more brilliant productions to be ripped off by hordes of verminous parasitic little pirates? They are going to jack it in of course and do something that actually pays them for their labours. Or maybe they will just double their prices to try to make their efforts worthwhile! Eventually there will be far less producers and outlets and, inevitably, far fewer games produced. The few who survive will jack up their prices to justify staying in business and they will get away with it because there will be little competition.

Using high prices as an excuse for copying is total BLX! If making games cheaper were to be considered as a method of reducing piracy, the price would have to come down to that of a blank tape. What arrant nonsense! Trying to justify copying on the basis of making personal backups is also hogwash. If a tape is genuinely faulty it will normally be replaced by either the retailer or software house. With the exception of a need to save a human life, NO EXCUSE IF GOOD ENOUGH TO JUSTIFY STEALING.

How about a nice serious, responsible and accurately researched article on copyright, the new law, how it effects the boy pirate, the producer, advertiser and retailer of copy devices — preferably before all the programmers stop producing games for your guys to review?
John Trott, TC Computing Services, 28 Kenvarra Park, Coleraine, Co Londonderry

Well John, you see just how long-suffering I am! Commercial piracy does seem to have caught the headlines recently, obscuring the home copying that certainly continues unabated. Perhaps Newsfield's joining of forces with Specialist Retail press will result in some interesting spin-offs for a magazine article such as you suggest.
LM





DISKED OFF

Dear ZZAP!
When I purchased my CBM 64, it took me a while to find a good software magazine, then I discovered ZZAP! 64. Great, I thought everything I wanted, but when I started buying your sizzlers and Gold Medals (*Summer Games II, Koronis Rift, Winter Games* and *The Eidolon*) just to name a few, I discovered something else hardly heard of in ZZAP!, MULTILOAD.

Do you think anyone has access to a disk drive (I know you don't, as your reply to a letter in ZZAP! Rrap issue no 9) so why do you persist in reviewing the disk versions of all games when more often than not the cassette is an inferior product.

MULTILOAD almost destroys the game with its lack of options and inaccessability. If you can't review the cassette version why don't you wait until it's available and review it for the majority, ie: cassette owners.

So why don't you try and get back to your readers, just remember we're not all disk drive owners.

Gary Robinson, Slough, Berks

Sad but True: all the games you mention are American imports and as so often stated before, Americans don't have cassette games. Result: we get disks to review long before the cassette versions are available. Where there is any serious problem resulting from cassette load, it's usually stated when known. And if we waited for the cassette versions in most cases, we wouldn't be first with the reviews, would we . . . ?
LM

RE-WRITING HISTORY

Dear Lloyd,
Something strange is happening concerning a major event in recent American history, when loyal, upstanding young citizens perished, fighting the 'communist war machine'.

In America, defeat is hard to accept, but with thousands dead there was nothing else to do — until now.

When Hitler came to power, he re-wrote German history, which gained him support but, as everyone knows, it didn't help him gain popularity.

Now America seems to be following a similar trail.

First came *Rambo* — the film — why not re-use *First Blood* and send John Rambo back into the Vietnam war, fighting and killing communists single handed, by the hundreds, just as befits *Rocky IV*? The whole of America promptly goes out and buys up every Rambo weapon in sight and now believes it won the Vietnam war. Children can now play at being Rambo, and kill the baddies with weapons — only this time the baddies are communists and the weapons are knives, bazookas and guns — not make believe is it, anymore? Not only that, but these 'toys' are released in Britain, allies of America (even though they defeated us in the Civil War).

Not only does America now think it won Vietnam, but half the kids in Britain think it also.

Still with me so far? Well, wait for it — so far it's been the film and game — both make believe and totally stupid. Now there is a serious side to it — not only can you help America with the Vietnam War for the third time, but do so tactically as the most serious game of all — a wargame simulation.

Now think about this, if the strategists of America couldn't help the US of A win Vietnam, how can a mere wargamer of today do any better — well they probably can if the wargame is made in America — no doubt you can't lose against the, quote 'Communist war-machine'.

So, to all software houses in Britain, stick to make believe games, they sell better, and don't copy the American way of thinking — I couldn't stand the wait for the adventure where you, as a lone Vietnam war veteran have to kill the evil communists and rescue the trapped princess, it'd be too much . . .

Stephen A Graham, Carlisle, Cumbria

Re-writing history is a constant game. Do you know now whether the Romans were a Good Thing for Britain or a Bad Thing? Was Henry VIII really so rotten to his wives? Was Richard III a much-maligned, hard-working king with a slight stoop or an evil child murderer with a devilish hunchback?

There's a moment in time when 'history' passes into the public domain becoming almost romantic fiction. True, maybe Vietnam hasn't actually reached that point yet. Rather more to the point, SOME Americans are re-creating recent history in an attempt to wipe out the bitterness of defeat — it's a cathartic exercise (LMLWD). I doubt whether in the long run history will record Vietnam as an American victory because of a few hysterical films, a successful marketing ploy to sell toys, or a wargaming computer game.
LM

That seems to be more than enough to fill my allotted pages. It's time to take my long-suffering, slim/bulbous person out of this madhouse of pre-Christmas decoration for another month (by which time Dick Ed will no doubt be arguing with Julian over what Easter decorations to put up. That's life for you — we hurtle from statutory holiday rap to bank holiday like a diary gone mad). If you're mad (or sane) or just plain angry, write to LLOYD MANGRAM, ZZAP! RRAP, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB. I may be listening . . .

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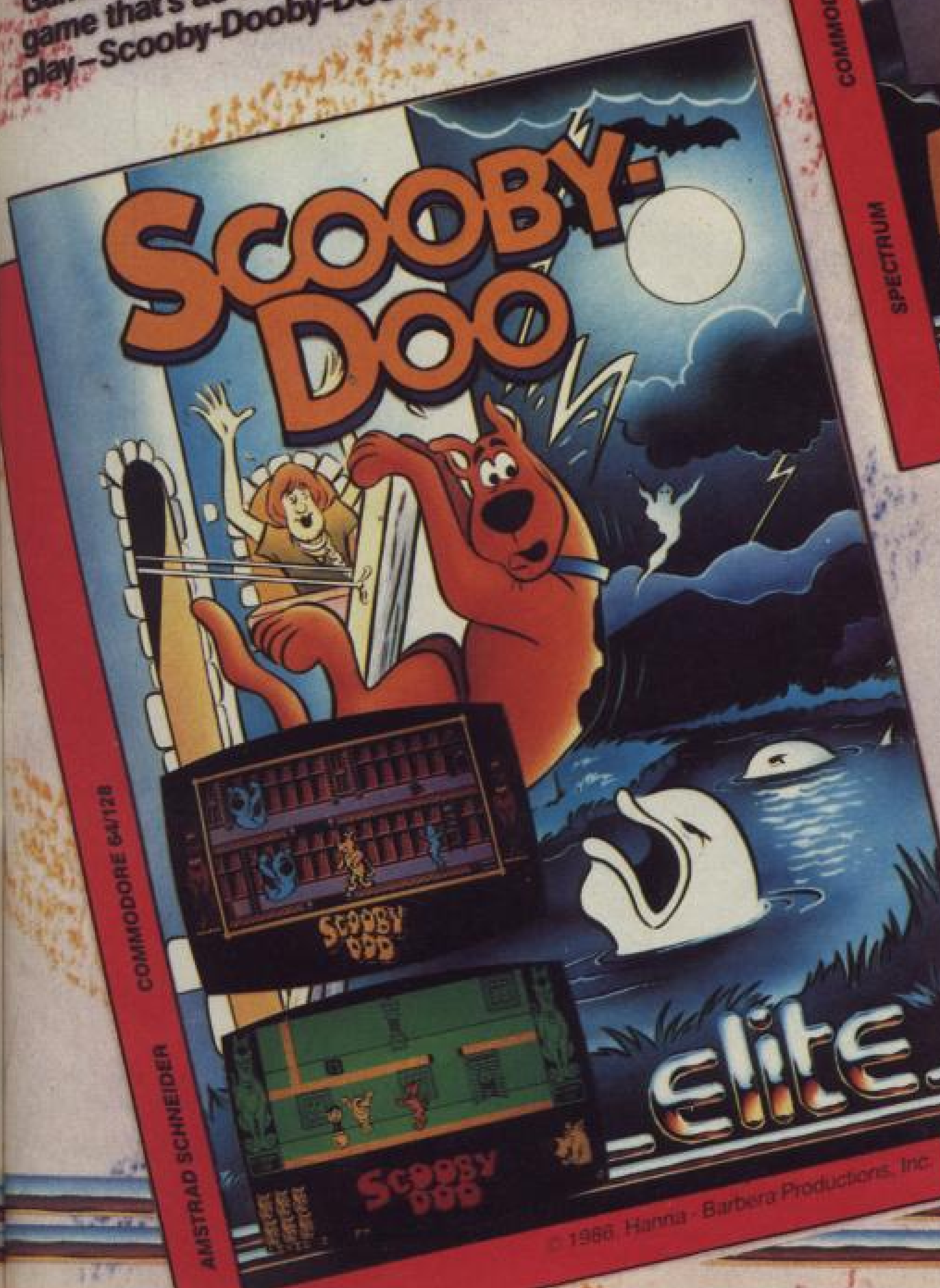
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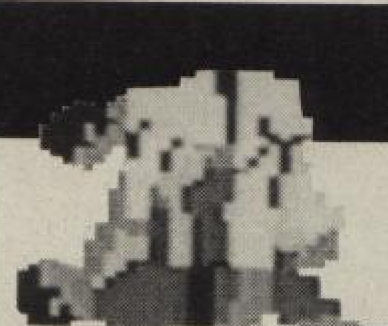
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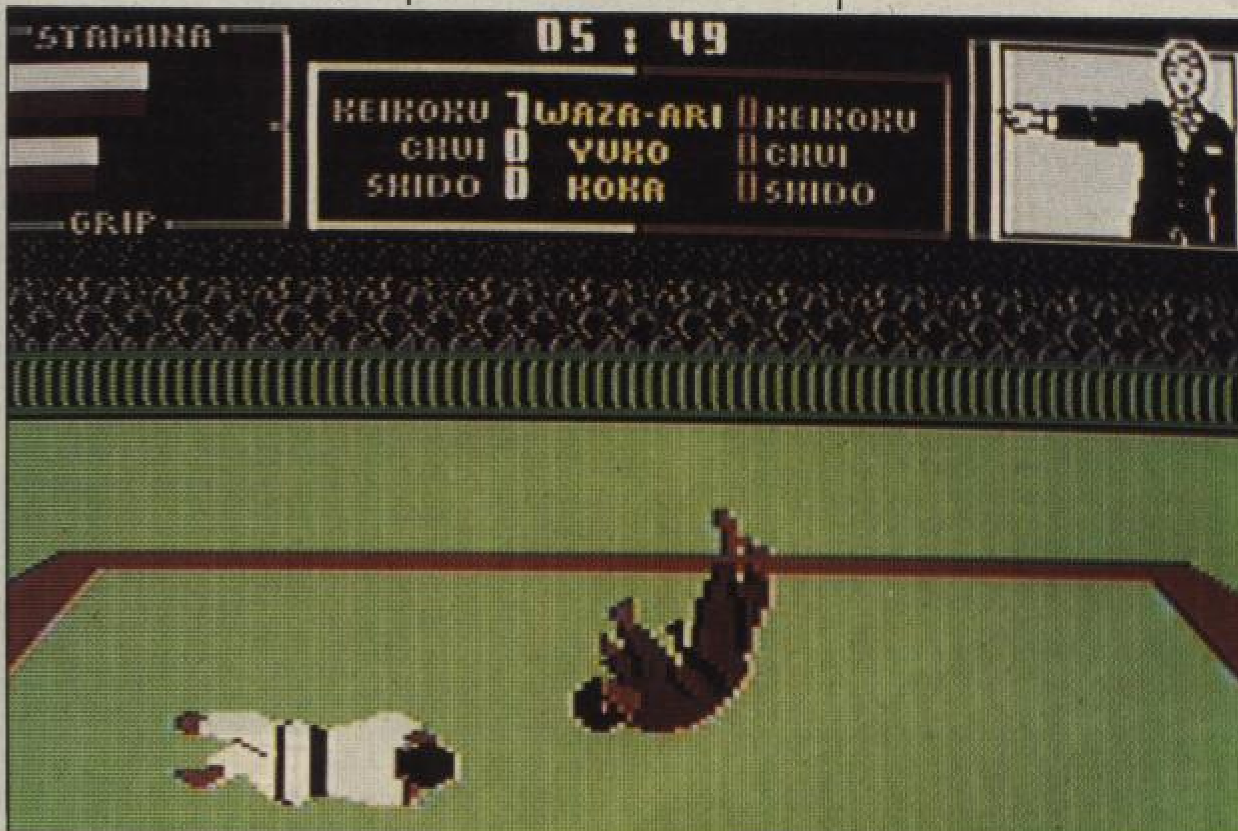
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UCHI MATA

Martech, £8.95 cass, joystick only



Oriental martial arts have been around for centuries. Karate, Tai-Kwon-Do, Kung Fu and Kendo all rely on strength and dexterity with some form of weapon, ranging from rice flails to a clenched fist. However, the well known present day derivative of Ju-Jitsu — Judo — differs from other forms of self defence in that no weapons are used at all. Instead of bashing the living daylights out of an opponent, Judo relies solely on using the strength and weight of an opponent against them.



Uchi Mata offers you the chance to throw either a computer or human controlled opponent around the screen in a series of bouts, scoring points in much the same way as Brian Jacks would in a live contest. Each bout is played over two minutes and points are scored by successfully throwing the opposition.

All throws are executed by moving the joystick in more than one direction, a sort of sweeping action. However, before your opponent can be thrown you have to get a good grip, done by quickly pressing the fire button when in range. Once a successful grip is made, a 'grip light' is displayed to signal that you must attempt to perform a throw. If a move is not executed as soon as the grip light appears, then another attempt has to be made at gaining a good grip.

Once a throw has been performed, the referee appears in the top right hand corner of the screen with his hand outstretched to indicate how many points have been awarded for the throw. Either three, five, seven or ten points are given, depending on how your opponent lands. If you manage to perform a perfect throw, ie: the opposition lands flat on his back, then a full ten points are awarded and the bout is over. Otherwise, the player with the most points is declared the winner when the time limit expires.

Whenever a move is made by an attacking player, the defending player can counter it if he is fast enough. If the defending player is actually thrown, then a quick wiggle on the joystick in the right direction will have him landing on his feet.

Only four major moves are provided in the instructions, but by using the training option it is possible to discover undocumented throws and practice defensive moves.



I always thought International Karate **was the bees knees of beat em ups, as it was one of the only game where one particular move couldn't be repeated to send your score spinning forward. In** Uchi Mata **the throw isn't quite so important, but a good grip is. Far more skill is required in performing a throw in** Uchi Mata **than in any other beat em up, it's not just fast reactions and quick thinking which are involved. The idea of a training mode is very sound as it allows you to learn some of the more impressive throws which are not given.** Uchi Mata **is a game for quick thinking throwers not snap happy chappies with bash happy choppies.**



When this first came in it seemed really impressive with its wealth of moves, excellent animation and all. On playing I became a little disillusioned: it seemed too easy and opponent after opponent fell to the same move . . . how boring. Was it another case of the Fist **syndrome? No! After watching and playing a few more games it became apparent that the third dan opponent was just about impossible to beat without learning some of the defensive moves — so much for the safe move! Later opponents are really challenging and the game becomes totally addictive as you battle to get a good grip or break your opponent's. The two player mode is great fun too, especially if both are proficient at the game. Great stuff, highly recommended to all fighting game fans.**



At first Uchi Mata **seems confusing and unplayable. It's not until you thoroughly read the instructions and begin to use a couple of simple moves that you get into the swing of things. Then, you can really appreciate the game. This isn't a straightforward beat em up, there's a lot more to it than simply pressing the fire button and moving the joystick in one direction. A good grip is important, as is the position of your feet, and the moves have to be performed quickly and precisely. A great deal of skill is involved in actually grabbing the opposition and gaining enough of an advantage to throw him. It's fairly easy to get to third Dan with little knowledge of attacking or defensive moves, but to become proficient and progress past third dan it's essential that you have a thorough understanding of defensive moves. Successfully performing a throw is extremely gratifying and highly rewarding. The players aren't very well drawn, but they move superbly and add to the overall feel of the game. The spot effects are functional and the music is fitting but irritating — fortunately it can be turned off. Overall,** Uchi Mata **is a classy, playable simulation which will certainly appeal to those interested in the sport.**

PRESENTATION 95%
Two player and practice options. Adequate instructions and exceptional use of joystick.

GRAPHICS 80%
Reasonable definition but effective animation.

SOUND 75%
Simple tune and functional spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 82%
The throws prove initially overwhelming, but are easily mastered with practice.

LASTABILITY 91%
Ten levels of increasingly challenging and rewarding play.

VALUE 86%
Could be cheaper, but it's the only Judo simulation available.

OVERALL 89%
An addictive and challenging simulation which requires quick thinking as well as fast reactions.



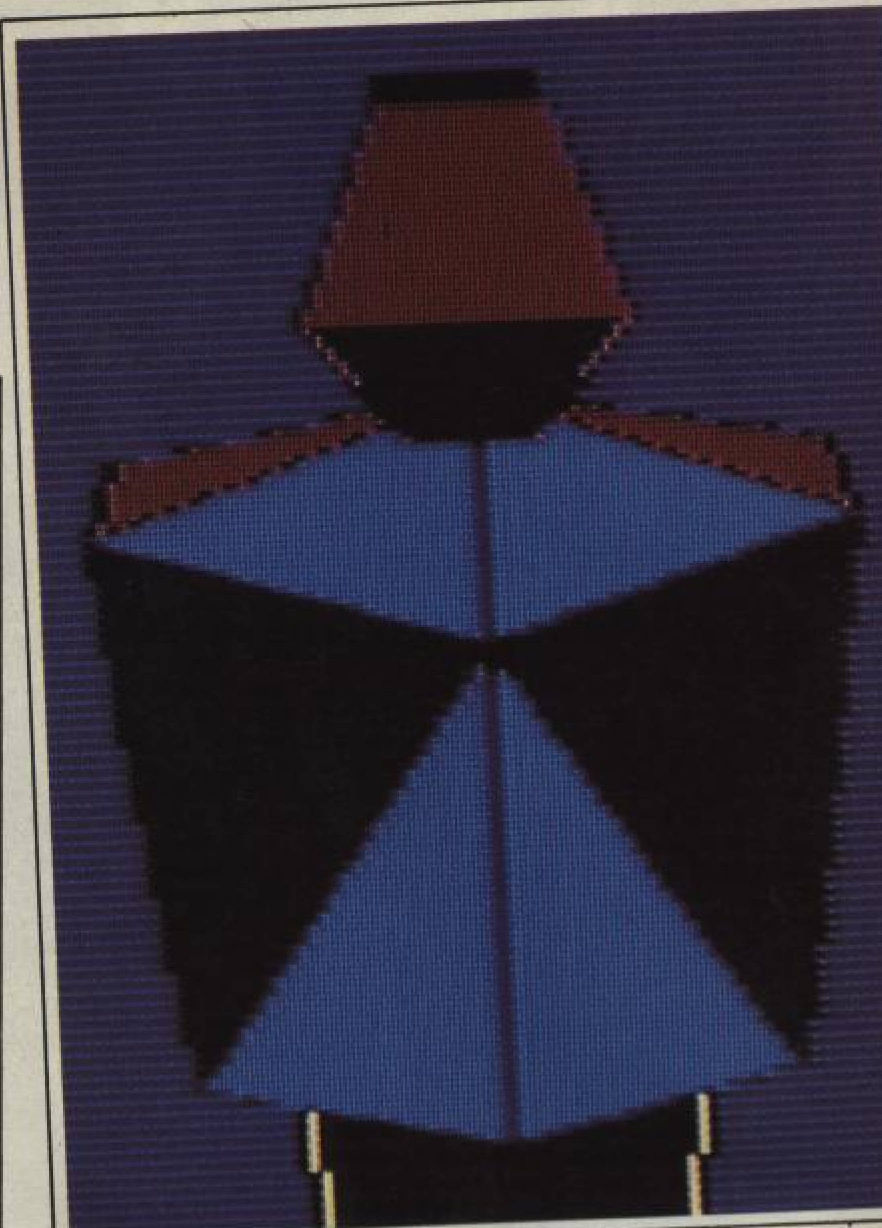
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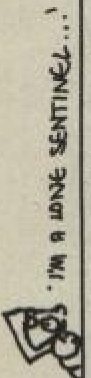


The Sentinel — all seeing, all powerful . . . almost. No-one is quite sure who or what it is or where it came from, but it's here. It's here and if it isn't stopped it will take control of the whole universe. It will drain the energy from every planet in our solar system, redistributing it as it sees fit. It has already conquered 10,000 worlds, and now it will claim ours.

Unless

A miracle. The creation of a robot. A Synthoid. A lifeless shell powered by thought. An entity with properties similar to those of the Sentinel. Capable of absorbing and shaping energy to its own requirements. Capable of destroying the awesome threat.

And so the Synthoid is transported to the nearest planet ruled by the Sentinel. It's objective is clear: eradicate the presence of the Sentinel and reclaim as many of the 10,000 worlds as possible.



Each planet dominated by the Sentinel is presented in first person perspective and is fashioned into a landscape comprising of three-dimensional solids arranged to form hills, valleys and chequered plateaus on which trees are planted. The Sentinel always stands atop the highest point on the landscape. The Synthoid always materializes at the lowest point. To dispose of the Sentinel, the Synthoid must absorb it. However, to do this the Synthoid must be able to see the base of the square occupied by the Sentinel. This is the only way an object can be absorbed.

The Synthoid is not part of the landscape or the energy distribution, so its appearance is not detected by the Sentinel . . . until the Synthoid absorbs a tree and affects the planet's energy status. Should the Sentinel detect such a change in the balance of energy, it will slowly turn clockwise or anticlockwise to view its surroundings in an attempt to locate the source of the imbalance, ie: the Synthoid. Once located, the Sentinel will slowly drain the Synthoid of all its energy, reverting it to trees which are then replaced at random positions on the landscape.

If the Sentinel can't see the square on which the Synthoid

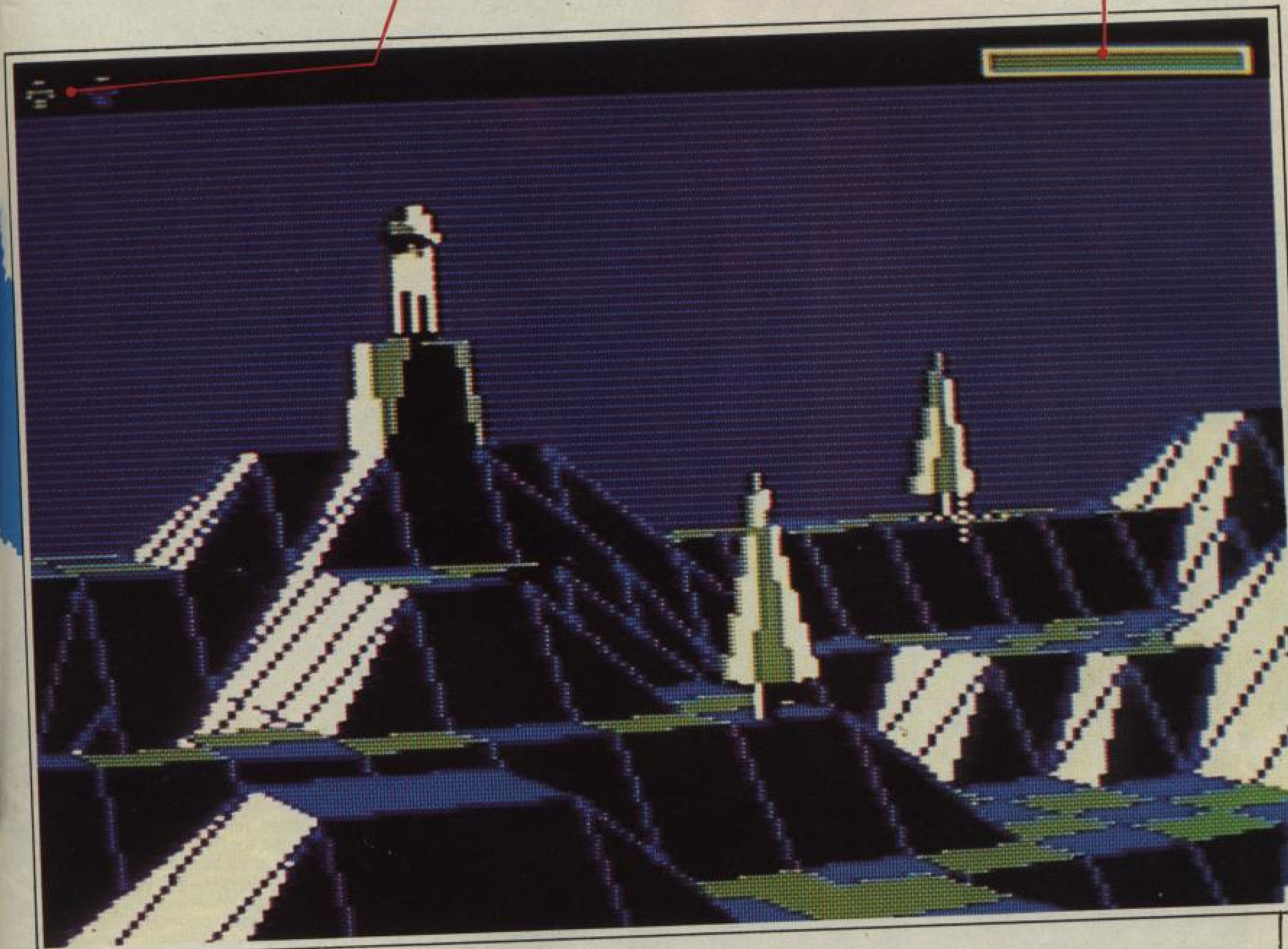


Oh dear, what have Firebird done? How can they expect to sell an absolutely brilliant game when it depends on your capacity for deduction under pressure? Yes, sad as this must seem, this game makes you think. I know this will come as a shock to some of you who have only ever pressed fire buttons before, but really it's not all that bad. In fact, contrary to popular belief, it can be fun to use the space between your ears to play a game. Take it easy, now. Play the game after you have had a good rest and it will do you more good than harm. Basically, what you have here is the best game ever written for a computer. In fact, there is no way the concepts used in this game could ever have been realised without a computer. That is what stretching a computer to its limits is all about. Pure genius. Larry Niven once envisaged 'wireheads', people who had a soft electrical current sent directly to the pleasure centre of the brain for the ultimate in stimulation. Until then, I guess we can make do with this. But of course, you lot will probably think it's boring. Well crawl back into the pond with the rest of the amino acids . . .



The Synthoid's energy status: a boulder is worth two trees and a robot is worth three trees

Scanner Gauge: fills with distortion when the Synthoid is being scan ned by either a Sentinel or a Sentry



resides, it can't absorb the Synthoid's energy. So, the Sentinel creates a Meanie from a tree near to the Synthoid. A Meanie can't absorb energy, but it can force the Synthoid to hyperspace to a different, possibly more inconvenient part of the landscape. Three units of energy are lost when the Synthoid hyperspaces.

(Energy cannot be created or destroyed, it only changes from one form into another). Both Synthoid and Sentinel have the ability to manipulate energy — thus, energy permitting, the Synthoid can change a portion of its energy into another object: either a tree, a boulder or another robot.

The Synthoid cannot move — physically. However, by creating another robot shell it can transport from one point to another, provided the base of square onto which the Synthoid wishes to move is visible. Once the Synthoid has teleported, the old shell can be absorbed to regain the energy lost.

If the Synthoid places a robot on top of a boulder and then teleports, it can increase its 'height' and see squares which were previously out of view. By continually using this technique, the Synthoid can make its way around the landscape until it can see the base of the square occupied by the Sentinel, whereupon it can absorb the Sentinel.



I can't comprehend how Geoff Crammond conceived this game. It is an immaculate conception. 100% original. It is unique. There has never been a game like it and there never will be. The only valid comparison I can make is that The Sentinel **is the computer game equivalent of chess. It's a timeless classic which will spawn many an imitation, none of which will be in the same league. The look of the chess pieces and board can be changed, but the game always remains the same. The nature of the game can be altered, but not improved upon. One word of warning, though:** The Sentinel **is such an unusual concept it will not be appreciated by everyone who experiences it. It will only appeal to those who truly appreciate its qualities. And then it grabs you so hard it's frightening to think it might never let go. But then, who cares when you get hooked by something as mindblowing as this . . .**



As games go on the 64 most of them are based around effect. Presentation is everything and if you slap a passable game on top then you've got a hit. In most cases that's not so bad, people are usually quite happy. But this game is different. It's all game. There's no frills, just the game. Nothing is superfluous, the graphics just do their job, the sound just does it — it's all functional. That leaves the game. And it's brilliant, I haven't seen anything this good on any computer. Ever. How someone can come up with an idea like this is totally beyond me. This is something very special indeed, probably the most innovative thing since Elite. **It does take a little perserverance to get into the game but the effort is definitely well spent. The atmosphere can really take you over. The on-screen action doesn't appear to be all that fast, but once things get going you really do have to think and move very quickly indeed.** The Sentinel **is near as dammit perfect — mentally demanding, extremely rewarding and technically astounding. Firebird have got something to be proud of, and I'd advise anyone to try the experience.**

ZZAP! TEST

THE
SENTINEL





Mmmm . . . For quite a few days now there have been arguments over the ratings to this game. I'm in a minority here at ZZAP! — I don't think The Sentinel quite deserves the Gold Medal awarded to it, personally I think a Sizzler rating is more fitting. OK, so it's a good game which I initially really enjoyed playing, but I couldn't quite find that extra something to keep me coming back for another go. Admittedly, The Sentinel is an amazing concept, one of the best a home computer has seen, and there's plenty there for those who like the game. But I couldn't quite get into it. Perhaps I'm completely wrong . . . What I strongly recommend you to do is try it out for yourself first — you could either love the program, appreciate its qualities like me or just downright hate it. After all, our reviews are based on a balance of personal opinions — sometimes unanimous, sometimes not . . .



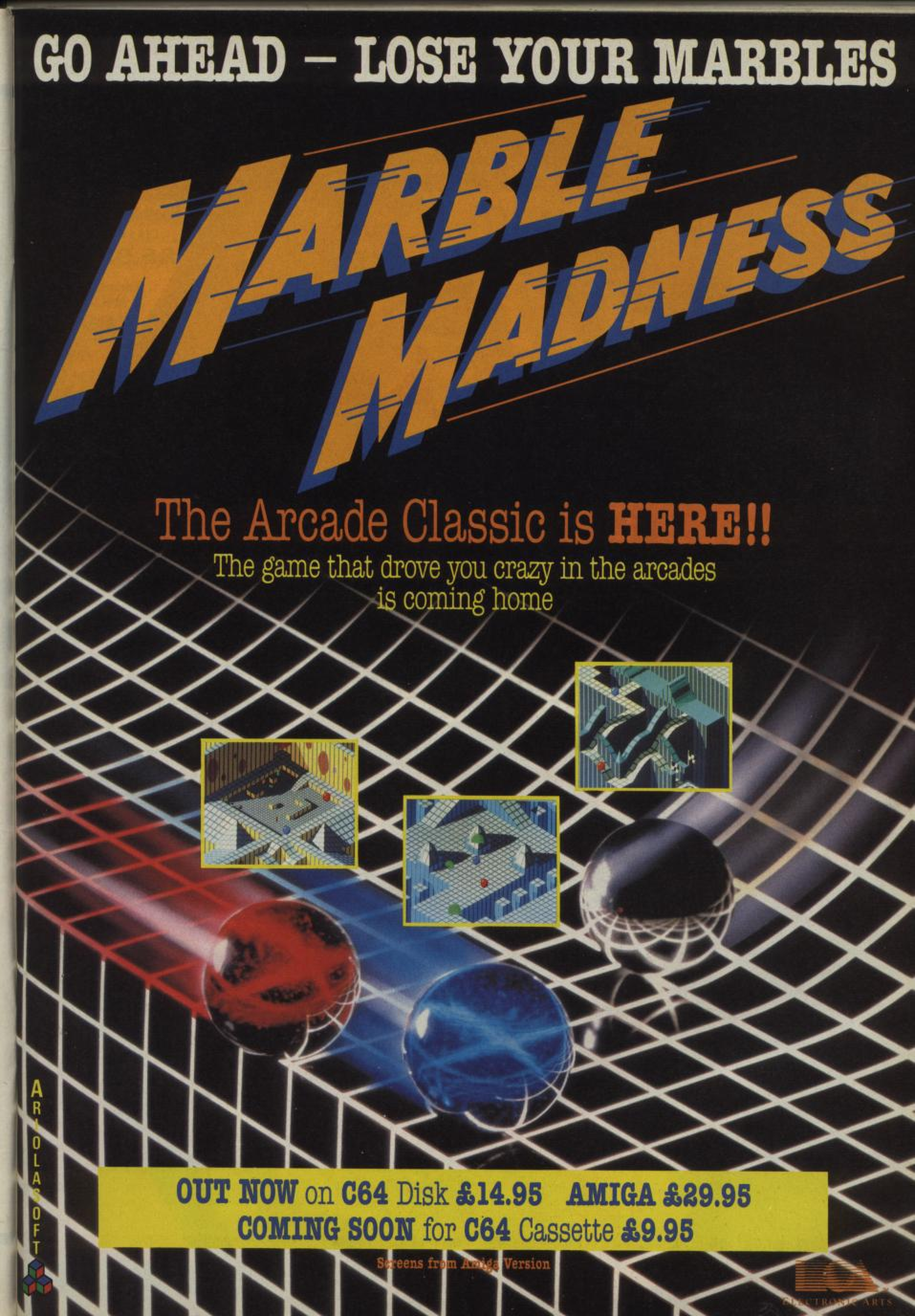
Once the Sentinel has been absorbed, no other object can be taken. So, the Synthoid must place a robot shell where the Sentinel once stood and hyperspace to another planet. The more energy left after hyperspacing, the further the Synthoid will travel. Thus, by absorbing a sufficient amount of energy it is possible to hyperspace from the first planet to say, the twentieth.

Each planet has a special security code — given after the Synthoid has absorbed the Sentinel and hyperspaced. By using these codes, the Synthoid can progress through the 10,000 levels without having to start from the first planet every time.

Higher levels also feature Sentries — creatures which look slightly different to, but behave exactly the same as the Sentinel. However, the Sentries remain active once the Sentinel is absorbed, so they are best disposed of before the Sentinel. There can be as many as five Sentries positioned on a landscape along with the Sentinel, each posing a problem of its own.

The Sentinel is without doubt an exceptional piece of software. It deserves credit — hence the Gold Medal award — but it defies rating since it is in a class of its own. The four critical appraisals are intended as a guideline. The decision to indulge in this unique experience is entirely in your hands . . .




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First came "The Way of the Tiger" the martial arts classic in which you had to prove your physical skills to become a Ninja. Now you have to prove your supreme mental agility in the second part of the Way of the Tiger saga "Avenger", the ultimate arcade adventure. Yaemon the Grand Master of Flame has assassinated your foster father Naijishi and stolen the Scrolls of Kettsuin. You have sworn to the God Kwon that you will avenge Yaemon's murderous act and recover the sacred scrolls. Your enemies are many, varied and all are deadly. All your skills courage and nerve will be called upon when you begin the final conflict in the Great Keep. Good Luck... only the brave hearted will survive.

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DANTE'S INFERNO

Beyond, £9.95 cass, joystick or keys

I am the way into the doleful city,
I am the way into eternal grief,
I am the way into forsaken race,
Justice it was that moved my great creator:
Divine omnipotence created me,
and highest wisdom joined with primal love,
Before me nothing but eternal things were made,
And I shall last eternally,
Abandon every hope, all ye who enter.

So begins Dante Aligheri's rather doleful poem **Inferno**, the tale of a pilgrim's journey through hell to Mount Purgatory on the other side of the world. Not the fettle for a computer game you may think, but using the story as the basis for a plot, Denton Designs have produced what must the first computer game-of-the-poem.





The game takes the form of an arcade adventure in which you must guide the pilgrim through limbo and the nine circles of hell to confront Lucifer, the root of all evil. You only have seven game days to complete this task — take too long and you will remain damned for all eternity . . .



The storyline to this game is certainly weird, but very original nevertheless. The format of the game itself isn't original though, it's just a pretty simple arcade adventure cum collect-the-objects-and-use-em up. The graphics are quite reasonable and portray the action nicely, and the spot effects and music are fine. Sadly, the game is lacking any real sparkle or nailbiting action. Ardent arcade adventurers might find it fun, but I didn't.

All action takes place in a scrolling window, with the pilgrim appearing in the middle of the screen. The pilgrim can be moved up, down, left or right and also made to pick up or drop objects — an action which needs to be taken at regular intervals during the game if you are to succeed in this task.

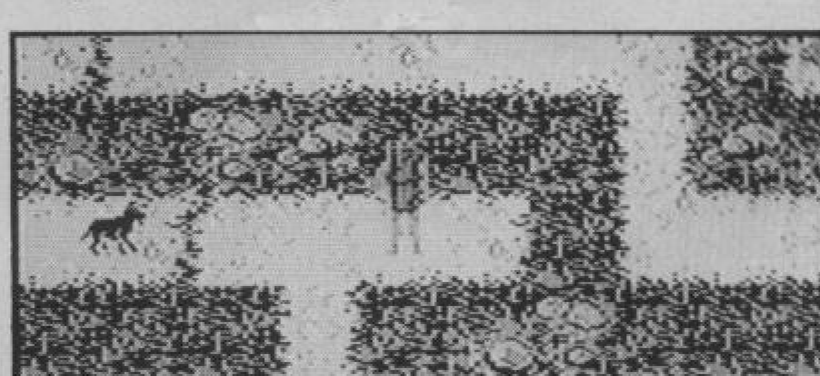
The adventure begins in the woods outside the cavernous portal of hell. After searching the woods for any useful objects, the pilgrim must walk through the gates of hell and begin his adventure proper. The gates of hell lead straight into limbo, a bare and blasted land patrolled by hornets.



I'm not overly impressed with this latest offering from Denton Designs. The gameplay and concept isn't exactly innovative, but like any 'trundle round exploring and solve a few puzzles' game there's quite a bit to keep you going. Ten quid is a high price to pay for a few pretty graphics and some interesting sounds.

If the pilgrim remains there too long, the hornets will seek him out and sting him to death.

The pilgrim can only escape from limbo by crossing the river Styx. But the cold water kills any living thing on contact, so what is the pilgrim to do? Perhaps Charon, ferryman of the river, can be persuaded to take him across in his boat . . .







I found the perverse nature of this game initially appealing, but lost interest after a few lengthy plays. Despite the unusual scenario, Dante's Inferno **is a fairly run of the mill arcade adventure with nothing new to offer. It's playable, but not overly compelling, and at the price I wouldn't consider it to be an essential purchase.**

Across the river lies the first circle of hell, the place where virtuous non-Christians are sent. An evil whip-wielding demon patrols this area and tries to track the pilgrim down. The demon's touch is death, so he is best avoided.

Passing through circle two you must dodge the lustful who are eternally blown around by a hurricane. If the pilgrim is unlucky enough to touch the lustful, he becomes one of them and the game ends. As you progress through the other seven levels you will meet such horrors as Medusa, the slothful, the gluttons, the wrathful, and finally Beelzebub himself.

PRESENTATION 79%
Informative instructions, good title screen and pleasant enough in-game presentation.

GRAPHICS 77%
Imaginative sprites but bland backdrops.

SOUND 68%
A reasonable ditty plays throughout.

HOOKABILITY 78%
The puzzles are quite straightforward and so is the objective.

LASTABILITY 68%
Nine 'circles' of hell to get through in seven days.

VALUE 60%
An expensive journey to hell.

OVERALL 66%
Nothing special — look before you leap.

ZZAP! TEST

TRAPDOOR

Piranha, £8.95 cass, joystick or keys

Strange things are afoot in a dark and slimy castle . . . Down in its dungeon there lurks a large blue creature called Berk, a poor underpaid and overworked minion whose life consists of performing every tedious task his tireless master demands. To make matters worse, the poor chap is shut away in the very lowest vaults of the smelly and dank dungeons. The grimy kitchen is coated with many years of wear



and tear. Slime grows from the wall and . . . well, it's just generally unpleasant.

Berk's master is holding a banquet this very night but nothing has been prepared for the celebration. So, Berk must race round the

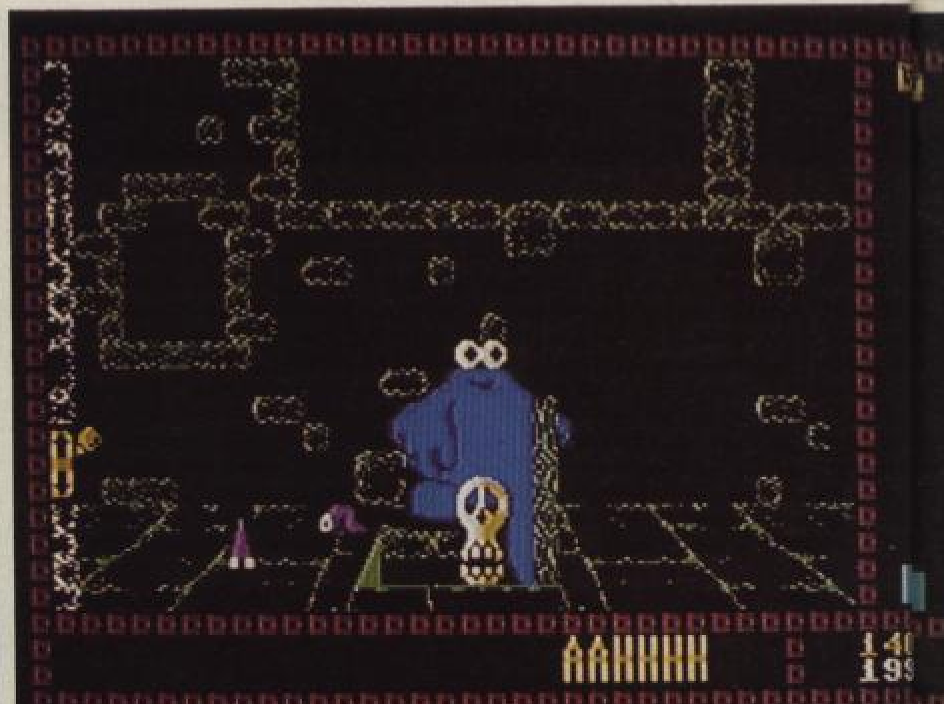


Trapdoor is one of those instantly appealing games which you really enjoy playing for a couple of games. The main character, Berk, is really something else in the way he moves about the place — he's beautifully animated and is the most appealing 'cute' character to appear on the 64 since Gribbly Grobbly. The other characters are really neat too, big, colourful and well animated. However, there is one big problem and that's playability. After a couple of games I was bored of doing the same thing time after time. If you're into fast action games then avoid it, but if you like puzzle games played at a leisurely pace then Trapdoor is worth your while.

kitchens making meals from whatever can be found lying around.

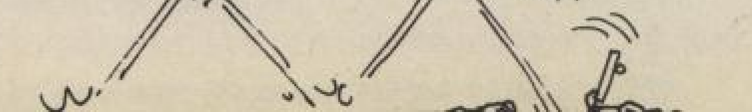
Berk is very houseproud and doesn't like to see the castle in an untidy state. Unfortunately, all his little minion friends insist on making a mess and getting everything disorganised. The main problem is Drukk, a small yellow creature who has a passion for purple worms which, unfortunately, your master has also taken a liking to.

A large trapdoor lies in the centre of the starting screen and can be opened and closed by a small lever. The trapdoor leads to the very depths of Berk Towers where all kinds of underworld nasties lurk. It also acts as a larder in which all manner of succulent beasties reside. Whenever Berk opens the trapdoor there is no knowing what may emerge. It's worth being nifty with the controls in case a ghost decides to announce itself, as it can only be disposed of by feeding it one of your precious worms. There's also a mean old flame-thrower which



All work and no play makes Berk have a mental breakdown and throw Boni the Skull down into the very depths of the castle . . .



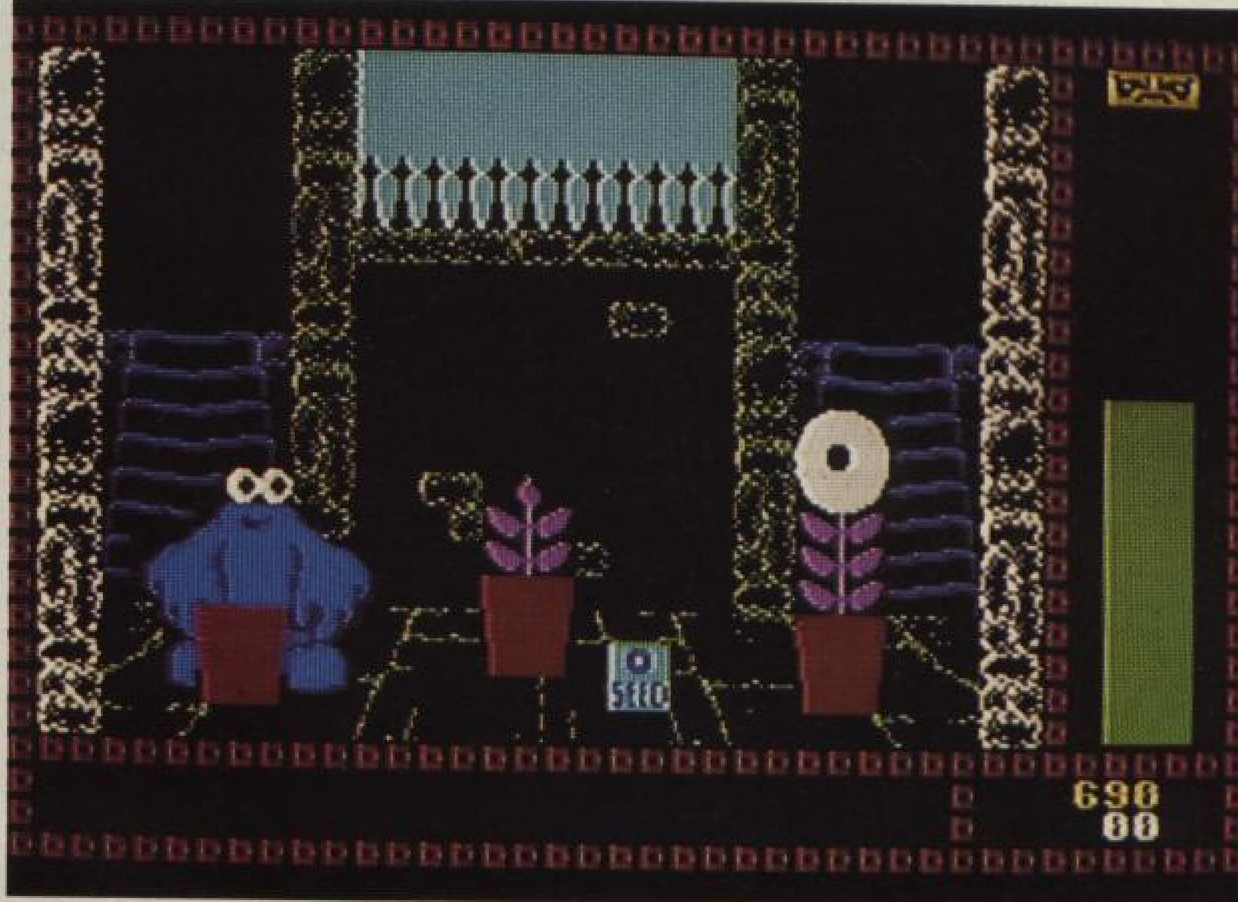


will insist on burning Berk to a smouldering crisp if it isn't lured back down in to the trapdoor in time.

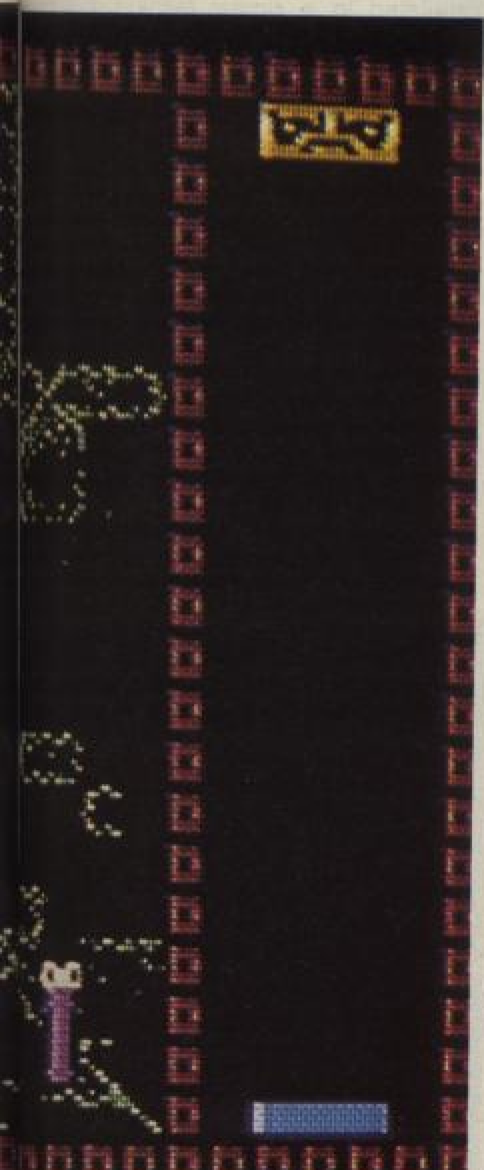
While Berk desperately tries to organise the castle meals, his



Graphically, *Trapdoor* is exquisite. All the characters are beautifully drawn and move smoothly (Berk is incredibly cute and well animated) and the backdrops are simple but very effective. As for the game itself ... OK, so *Trapdoor* doesn't boast a huge number of locations and there are only five problems to overcome. But it's the quality of the puzzles that counts in this game, not the quantity. The tasks are so involved and such fun to complete that they make *Trapdoor* worthwhile, especially at the price. And that's why it deserves to be a huge hit.



Eyeball Crush seems to be the order of the day here, as Berk cultivates a home grown eyeball — or three



Master relaxes in the Towers, getting fat on such delicacies as boiled Slimies. He shouts down his order for a particular meal in a resounding bellow and it is then up to Berk to prepare it.

On the far right hand side of the screen there is a temper meter. If the nasty Master is happy with Berk's work, then it stays at a low and happy level. But if he is kept waiting, the temper meter rises until it hits the angry meter at the top and the Master changes his mind and orders a totally different meal.

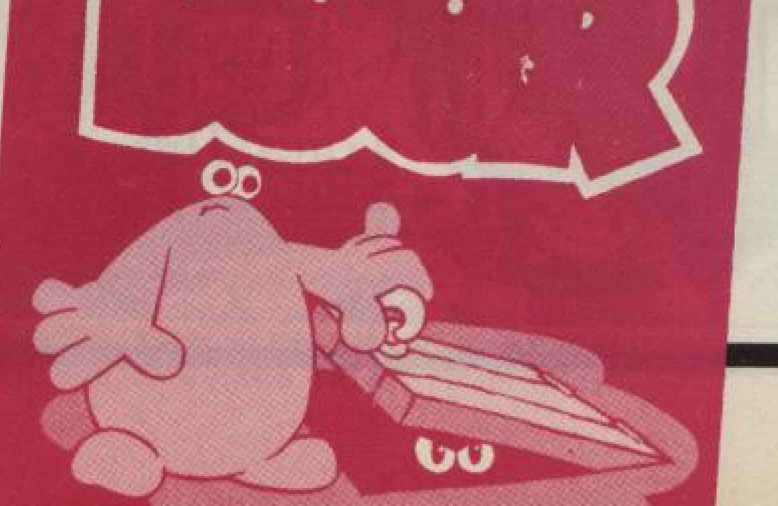
Assorted utensils are scattered around the kitchens which prove very useful for cooking and catching ingredients, but do remember to check everything as some pots are stacked inside others. If Berk loses an object that might be vital to complete a task, then it is really



***Trapdoor* is one of my favourite games at the moment, it has everything an arcade adventurer could wish for: great puzzles, super graphics (especially on the main character of Berk himself) and it's absolutely packed with humour. The great thing about *Trapdoor* is that it is very consistent, there appears to be no part of the game that is lacking, it's all there and it's all superb. If you miss this game, then you'll have missed one of the most magnificent puzzle games ever devised.**

quite pointless to carry on. The only way out is to throw himself down the trapdoor and end his miserable life. But there is no pride in suicide, and the unsympathetic Boss shouts down: 'YOU SILLY SUICIDAL LITTLE BERK!'.

If Berk completes all his chores by the end of the week, then his boss will be reasonably happy and send down his wages. Unfortunately, the money is locked up in a fortified safe, so Berk will have to work out how to open it before he can have a wild night on the town with his fellow Berks.



PRESENTATION 93%
Attractive in every way.

GRAPHICS 97%
Suitable backdrops and large, extremely well drawn and animated characters.

SOUND 64%
Weak title screen tune and a few reasonable spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 96%
Instantly appealing and addictive.

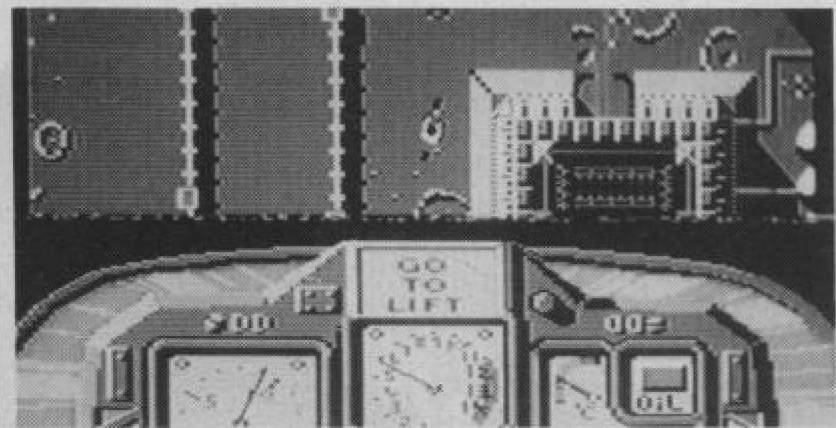
LASTABILITY 85%
Five tough tasks which are fun to complete.

VALUE 91%
A quality game at a sensible price.

OVERALL 89%
A highly novel and playable arcade adventure.

RED MAX

Code Masters, £1.99 cass, joystick or keys



Red Max puts the responsibility of saving mankind into your grubby little maulers. You see, following a devastating nuclear holocaust on Earth the survivors regrouped and began to rebuild civilization. Imagine their horror when they suddenly discovered that the sun was just about to go supernova — they'd survived a war, but were going to be wiped out by the good old friendly sun. Naturally they weren't going to give up without a fight and they set about finding a way of escaping the impending holocaust. A scientist worked out that the Moon could be colonised and a giant anti-gravity orb assembled on the dark side. This could be activated at the moment that the sun exploded to send the Moon spinning away from danger. The humans would then go into suspended animation for a couple of million years until the Moon's computers found a safe sun where it could park itself in orbit.

All went according to plan — until an alien race landed on the Moon, dropped a load of fission mines on its surface and sabotaged the power plants for good measure. To remedy the situation you must deactivate all twenty-seven mines, proceed down to the engineering level, turn on eight backup cooling systems and shut down the four power plants, then go down to the hibernation complex and re-animate nine crew members so that the aliens can be destroyed. Whew! To help you in your task you have at your disposal a Red Max moon bike upon which you can whizz about at high speed.

The screen display is split into two sections, the upper part of the screen is the playing area while the lower part features four useful readouts — a speedometer, rev counter, fuel gauge and shield indicator. Fuel can be picked up during the game, but shields are irreplacable and depleted as the bike runs into things. If either fuel or shields run out, a life is lost.

The main playing screen gives an aerial view of the surrounding area with the Red Max bike placed in the middle. The bike can be made to accelerate by pressing the fire button (releasing the fire button applies the brakes) or turn left or right — as it does, the landscape scrolls. What you must do is make your way over the surface of the Moon and run over the flashing mines to deactivate them. Once you've done that an alarm sounds telling you to make your way to the lift, which will take you down to the engineering level.

The mines have been put in the most inaccessible of places and to defuse all of them you must make your way through the Moon's automatic defence systems. These include laser fences, which can be turned off for a short period of time by running over the relevant switches, pulsing laser gates (which can't be turned off) and slime (which impedes steering and wrecks your tyres). All of these features deplete your shields, but there are other features like walls and buildings which totally destroy your bike if crashed into.

The other two levels can be completed in a similar fashion, although it gets increasingly more difficult to manoeuvre your bike around the maze of buildings and walls. Well, saving the day was never an easy task, now was it?



Arrgghhhh! It's The Last V8 **again. The graphics and sound may have changed, but basically it's the same game, just harder and more unplayable. The familiar twinkly screen glitch is still there and the annoying pause when you start the game. The sound effects are a complete and utter rip-off and sound exactly the same as those in** Sanxion. **The graphics are great, but the game is totally awful. If you want to waste two quid on a boring and unplayable game then go out and get this. If you're wiser with your money then spend it on something else.**



The main problem with Red Max **is its lack of consistency. The jolly ditty that plays on the title screen doesn't seem to fit the game, which deals with bomb disposal. To make matters worse, when you die by electrocution or crashing an even jollier tune plays — weird! The playing area is also incredibly small compared to the status section — which appears to have too much worthless info on it. If you found** The Last V8 **fun then give this a whirl, but it's not what I would consider to be an essential purchase.**



Oh my god, The Last V8 **has come back from the dead to haunt me — a binary zombie in the form of** Red Max. **It looks good, but plays incredibly badly. Just like the original.** Red Max **is far too frustrating to be worthwhile, even for two quid. If you reached nirvana with** The Last V8, **then you will probably get off on this.**



PRESENTATION 79%
Demo mode and good on-screen display.

GRAPHICS 84%
Effective backdrops and a reasonable sprite.

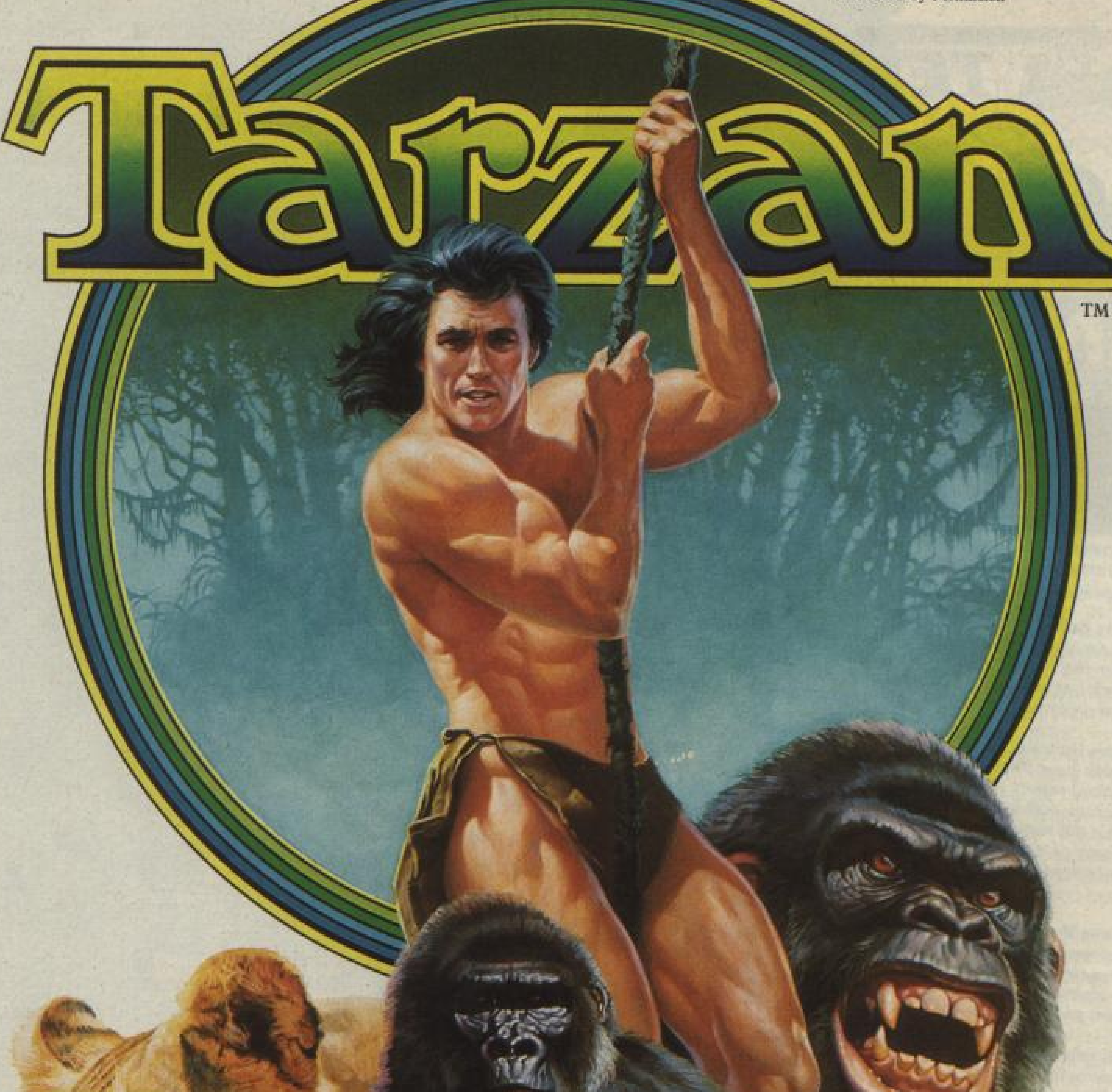
SOUND 67%
Jolly music and derivative spot effects which don't suit the game.

HOOKABILITY 44%
Some initial urge to explore . . .

LASTABILITY 32%
. . . which soon wears off due to frustration and boredom.

VALUE 42%
Cheap enough to interest fans of **The Last V8**.

OVERALL 36%
Not much of an improvement over its predecessor — **The Last V8.**



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... short-range nuclear missiles was still one of several obstacles to a Euro-missile agreement.

... black-out ... talls of the meetings, Rozanne Ms Ridgway said that President

WTV News Bulletin, 15th Jan 2086:
"Today peace talks between the Northern and Southern sectors broke down after the North refused to abandon the development of their controversial anti-radiation combat suit. The South have threatened to sever all diplomatic relations unless immediate action is taken."

WTV News Bulletin, 22nd Jan 2086:
"The South have broken off all diplomatic relations with the North. An unofficial report states that the South have also embarked on an anti-radiation combat suit development program. The report also claims that the wearer of the suit is rendered completely invulnerable to any form of enemy attack . . . News just in tells us that satellite intelligence reports intense Northern military activity along the border."

WTV News Bulletin, 25th Jan 2086:
"Unconfirmed reports of armed conflict along the North/South border have been denied by both Governments. Spokesmen for both Superpowers claim there is no cause for alarm. Please stay tuned for an important public service announcement."

General Broadcast Tape, 13.46hrs 27th Jan 2086
"An enemy missile strike has just been confirmed. Please, do not panic. Make your way to public or private shelters immediately. Do so in an orderly fashion. If there are no shelters in the vicinity, move to a safe place in your house. If you are out in the open l . . ."

Soviet officials have said that a comprehensive nuclear test ban is ...

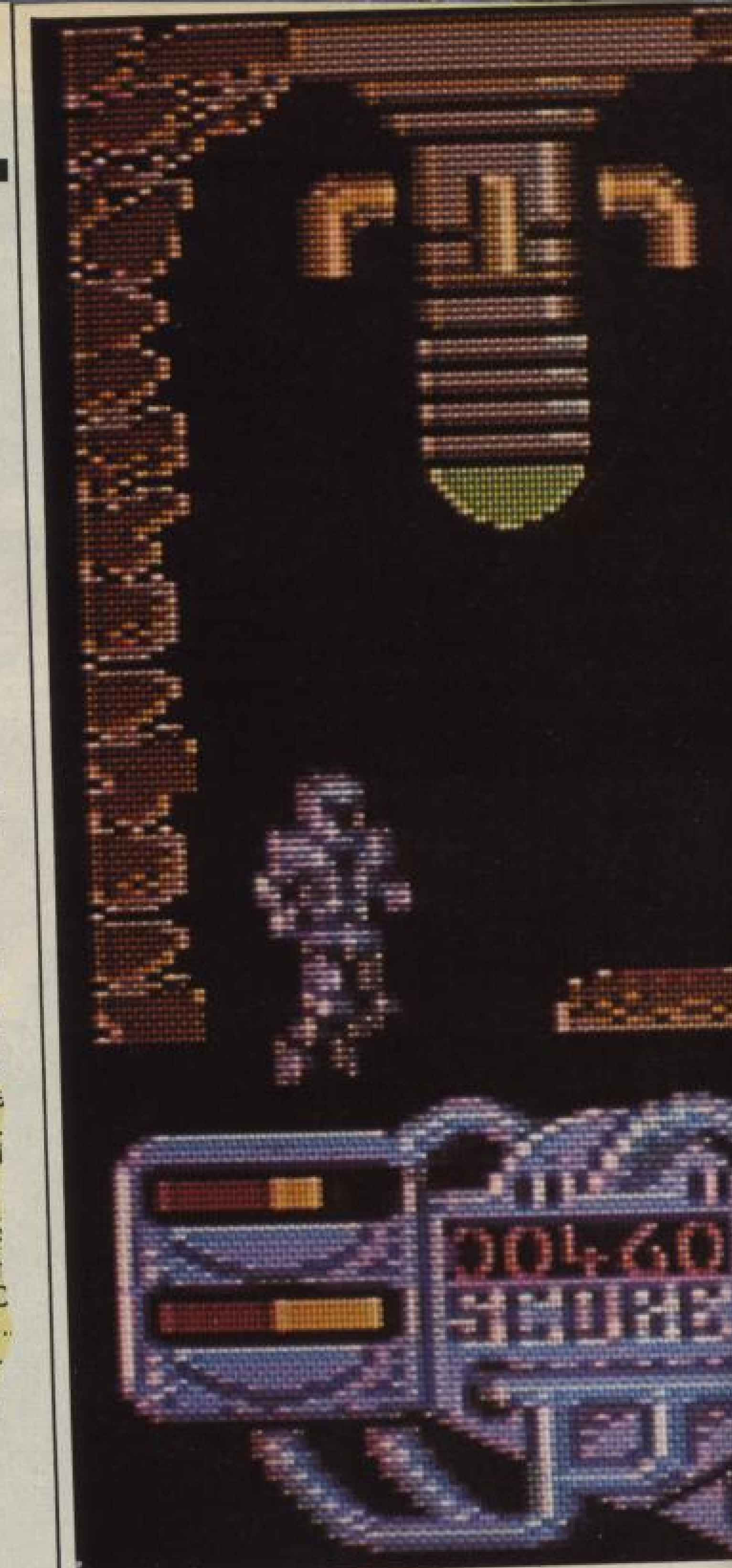
On human rights, Ms Ridgway said that the ...

Bourke,

Crazy H... Britain'... and fou... sport. ...

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Home Nev... Foreign Ne... Arts .... Book Revi... Business ... City .... Court & S... Crosswor... Country D... Features ... Food ..... Leaders ... Listings ... Money ... Share... Sport...



And there ended civilization as we know it. Over the following months a nuclear winter raged and the few survivors of the armageddon cowered deep beneath the earth in their small, dark, stinking shelters. Eventually, starvation forced them to the surface. When they emerged, they found an endless wasteland of rubble, completely devoid of life. If they were to survive, they would have to make for the countryside . . . and so the few began their long, fraught trek from the cities to the barren countryside. Many of the group fell by the wayside, but eventually a small number found a valley where vegetation grew, under the shadow of an old volcano.

Centuries passed. Generations arose, grew old and died, and genetic changes resulted in a hardier, stronger race. They lived a simple, peaceful life in which technology was considered the root of all evil as it evoked painful memories of the Great Catastrophe of ancient man and the ensuing struggles for survival.

The peace continued, until one fateful day when the skies boiled and grew dark with strange flying machines. From these ominous craft, many strangely garbed creatures came forth bearing sophisticated weapons.

A group of villagers were sent to greet the creatures in peace. But they were mercilessly sythed down under a hail of laser fire. The alien troops marched forward and razed the village to the ground, herding all the able-bodied humans as they did so. Some humans fought back, but any resistance was brought to a swift end by a trigger-happy clawed finger.

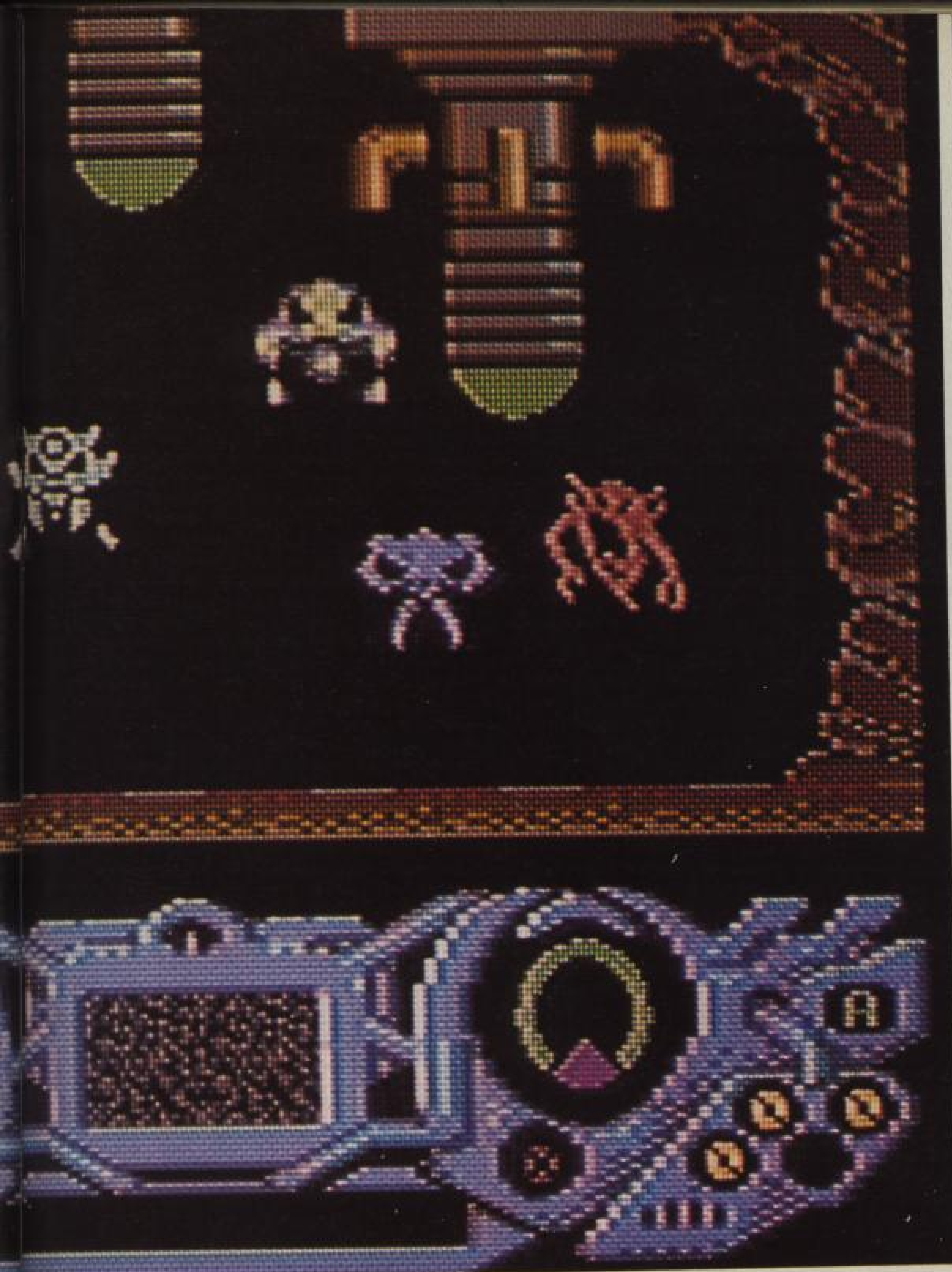
Once all apparent resistance had been brought to a close, the captives were set to work mining Earth's valuable minerals and the aliens made their base in the vaults deep beneath the volcano which overshadowed the remains of the village.

However, unbeknown to the alien oppressors, newborn males were taken from the mines and reared in secret camps. Over the years they were taught ancient battle arts and one man, Tal, proved himself to be the bravest and most fearsome warrior of all. The camp elders met and it was unanimously decided that it was Tal who should be sent on the mission to save his race.

Tal was brought in front of the elders and given an ancient blueprint. Upon its crumbling pages were scribed details of the sacred armour of Antiriad, the legendary combat suit which rendered its wearer invincible. Tal was told to enter the evil forest below the volcano and search for the suit. Once found, he must assemble its vital parts before entering the alien's lair to destroy them. He was despatched immediately and his search began. The survival of his race was in his hands . . .

Deep inside the alien stronghold, Tal has to contend with such delights as fire breathing statues. The blur in the top left hand corner of the screen is an alien which has just dropped its load





The Sacred Armour of Antiriad is a flick screen arcade adventure which puts you into the loincloth of Tal, just as he enters the evil forest. He can run left or right (by moving the joystick in the relevant direction) and jump by pushing up.

The forest is crawling with mutant creatures, deformed by radiation, as well as alien guards. These can be avoided, or disposed of with a well aimed rock (or two), thrown by pressing the fire button. Contact with a mutated creature or alien proves harmful to Tal and results in the loss of energy. If his energy is entirely depleted, then one of five lives is lost.

When Tal finds the suit he can 'enter' it, doing so makes the suit display area (shown at the bottom of the screen) burst into life as it reactivates. When activated, the suit displays the amount of energy Tal has left, along with the suit's energy level (in the form of a bar chart), your score, the radiation level outside the suit (which increases as you delve deeper into the alien stronghold), and the components which you have managed to collect.

To get the suit fully operational you must first collect four different articles: an implosion mine (used to destroy the alien stronghold), gravity displacers (anti-gravity boots which allow you to move the suit), a particle negator (a shield which protects Tal from the very



Only one screen away from saving his race, Tal realises that he's forgotten to collect one very important item — the implosion mine!



The Sacred Armour of Antiriad **is simply superb — there's no other word for it. Dan Malone's mini-comic is brilliant and the storyline is extremely well thought out. I wish Palace would produce a larger version of the comic with an expanded storyline, that would be great! The graphics are truly amazing with the Commodore's colours being used to their full to create the best backdrops I've ever seen. Just look at the statues and trees, for example . . . incredible! Tal himself is another classic, beautifully animated and extremely well drawn. The only disappointing thing about the graphics are some of the single colour sprites which look rather bland. Nevertheless, they're well animated. The sound is great too, with a very atmospheric, film-like soundtrack on the title screen and some good spot effects during the game. The game itself is a collect em up requiring quick reflexes and dexterity, rather than the old grey matter to solve any problems. There are quite a few locations, and a map is just about essential if you are to complete the game. If you're after a really slick and polished arcade adventure, then look no further than this — it's about the best around.**

THE SACRED ARMOUR OF
ANTIRIAD



The pulsar beam unit is within easy reach. well, if it wasn't for the alien guard firing a volley of laser fire across the screen it would be

high radiation levels in the alien stronghold), and a pulsar beam (a laser used to dispose of any troublesome aliens).

Before the suit can be moved (and used), a gravity displacer must be fitted. This handy device can be found near to the location of the suit and picked up by pulling down on the joystick when Tal is standing over it. Unfortunately, the other three articles are situated in less accessible places.

Once Tal has fitted the gravity displacer into the suit he can move anywhere on the screen, as long as the landscape allows him to do so. Contact with any alien creature results in a loss of energy, and if the energy reaches zero, the suit ceases to function.

Recharge cells are dotted around the map and can be picked up and used to replenish lost energy, but they are few and far between and should be used sparingly. A transporter unit is thoughtfully provided, so Tal can transport back to the suit if it is left in an inaccessible place.

Other problems come in the form of fire breathing dragons which roast away the suit's energy, alien gun implacements which constantly fire laser bolts across the screen, and invincible flying creatures which drop long metallic objects onto anything below. If you manage to avoid or destroy all these creatures and make your way to the very nerve centre of the alien's complex, you can plant and prime the implosion mine to destroy the alien complex, thus freeing your race from all alien oppression.

On playing Antiriad **for the first time I instantly fell in love with the the graphics. Here they seem more of an art form than simple set decoration for a game, and very atmospheric they are too. Palace really impress me with their style, which is distinctive but not repetitive in the least.** Antiriad **seems to be the** Cauldron **concept of puzzles taken a few steps further to produce an excellent game — great fun to play and satisfying to solve. Simply brilliant!**



PRESENTATION 97%
Unusual, but effective instructions. Excellent title screen and in-game layout.

GRAPHICS 98%
Incredible use of colour to create stunning backdrops. Superb multicolour sprites, but not enough of them.

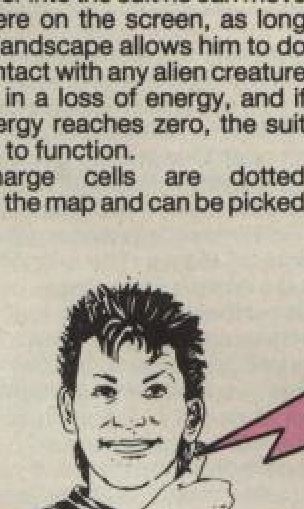
SOUND 91%
A memorable tune sets the atmosphere and the spot effects keep it going throughout the game.

HOOKABILITY 95%
Instantly playable and addictive.

LASTABILITY 90%
Completing the game is a hefty task, but an enjoyable one nevertheless.

VALUE 93%
Slick programs at this price are few and far between.'

OVERALL 93%
Another classy arcade adventure from Palace.

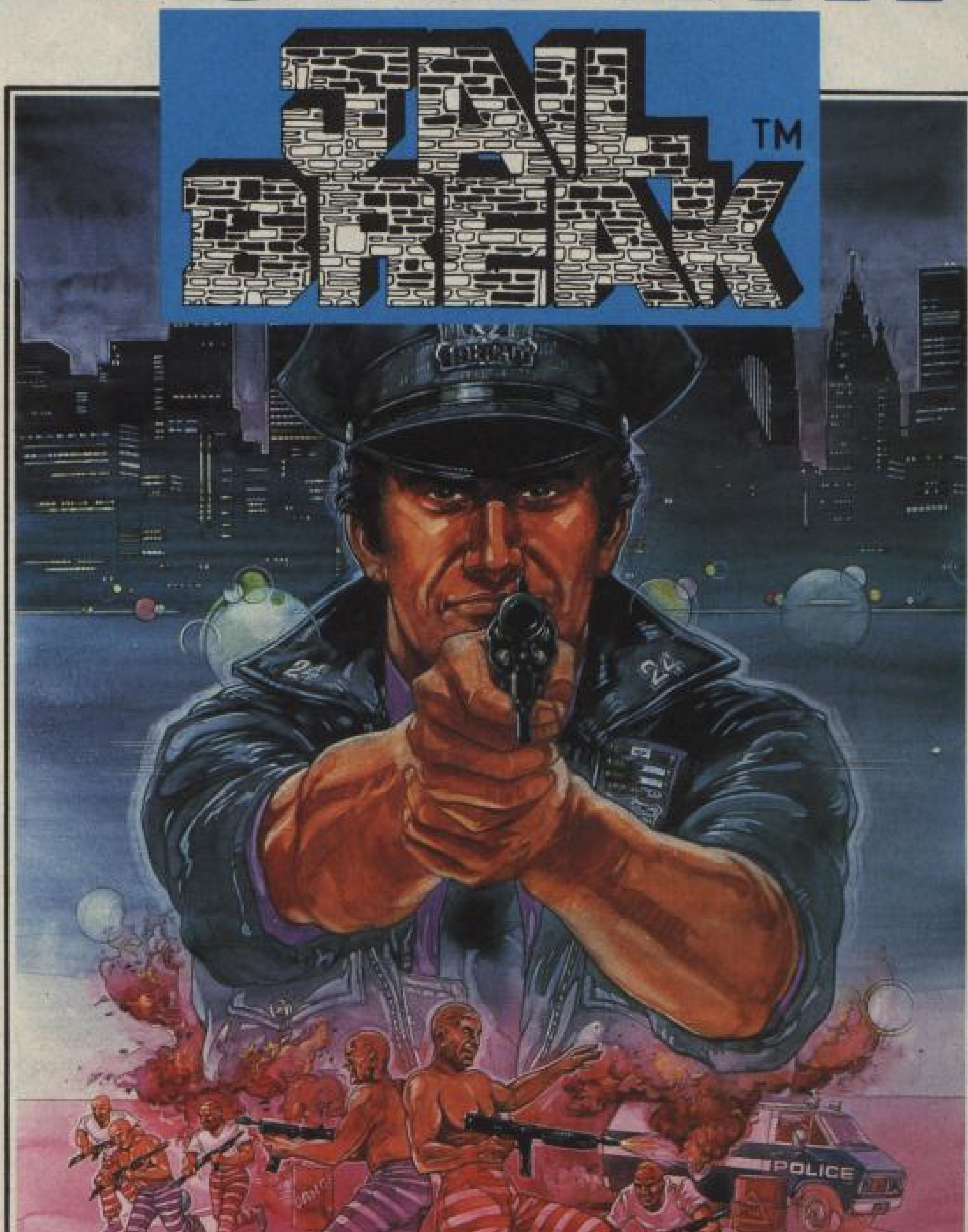


Antiriad **is initially great fun to play, there's no doubt about that. It's a very professional program (which is to be expected coming from Palace) with excellent presentation, and the graphics and sound are of a very high quality indeed (the stonework is beautiful and I just love the expressions of the faces on the trees). But I'm not so sure about its lasting appeal.** Antiriad **is a lot easier to play than** Cauldron **or** Cauldron II, **but I felt it lacked that certain 'something' to make me want to keep playing. Still, if platforms and mapping are your 'thing', you will definitely find** Antiriad **worth your while.**

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Screen shots from Arcade version

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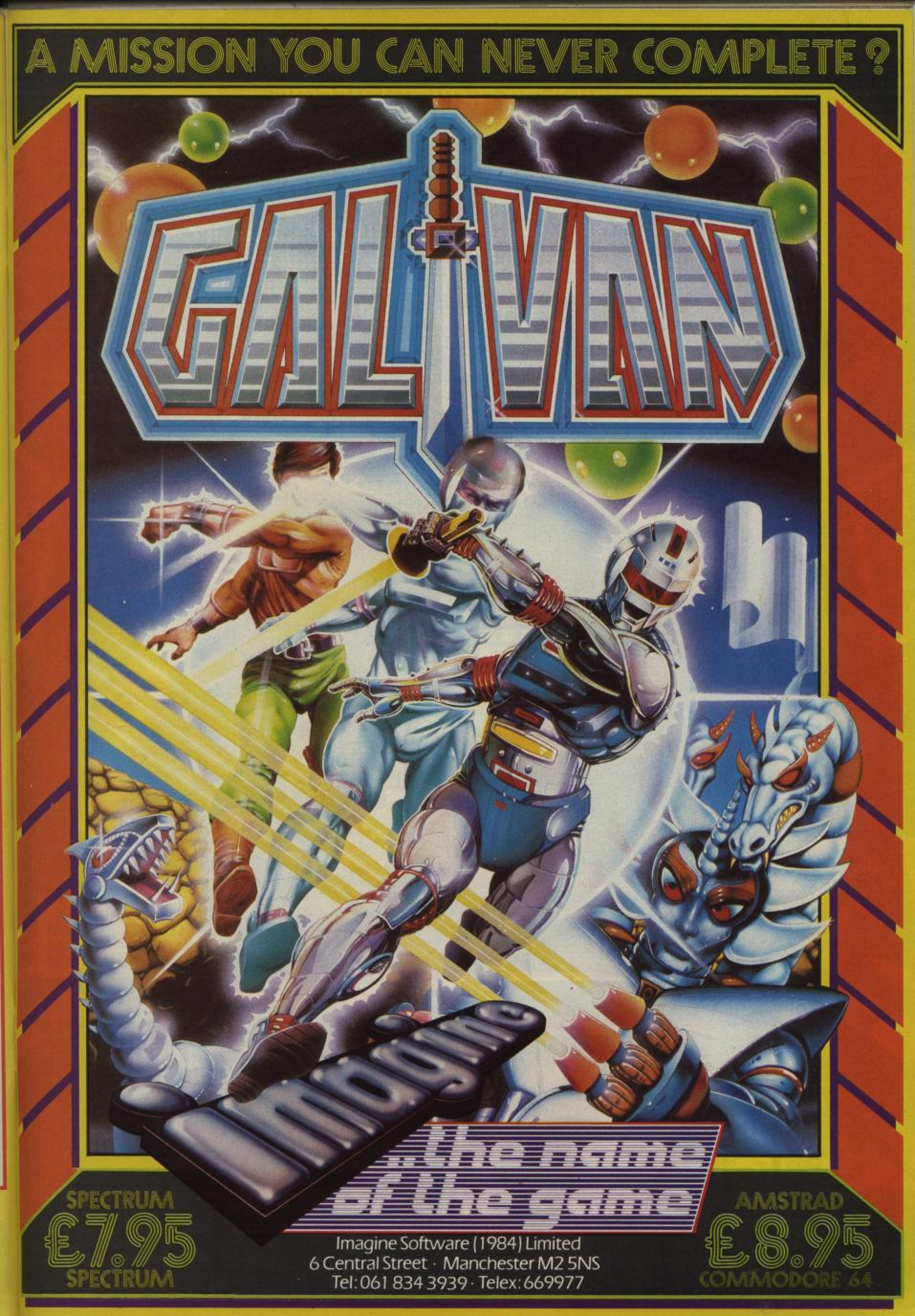
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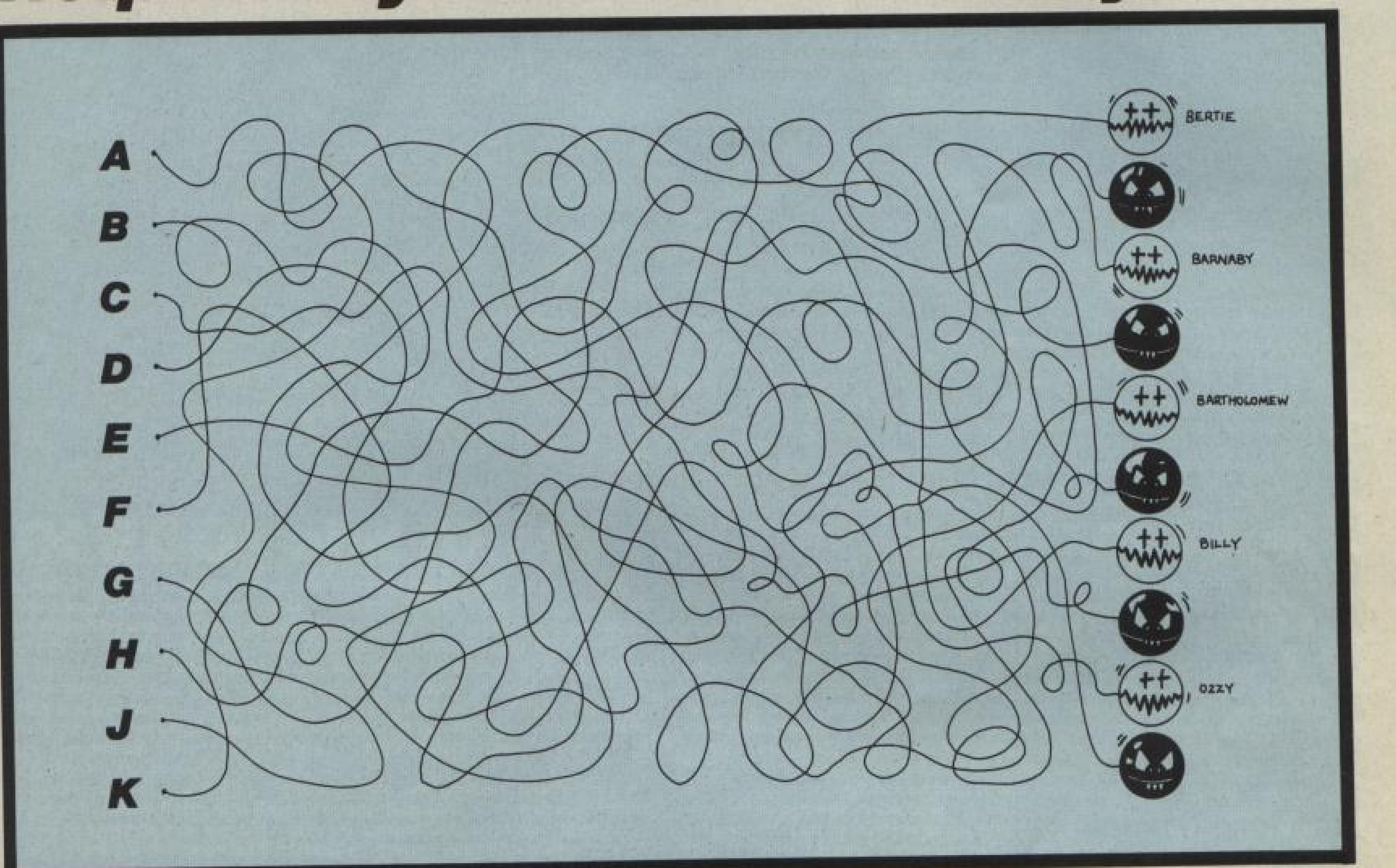
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A BIT OF BEARING MINDING

ZZAP! COMP

Help Bobby find his lost mateys



50 copies of Bobby Bearing to be won

You know it's not in my nature to gossip, but anyway . . .

Have you ever met such a troublesome family as those Bearings? It's the mother I feel sorry for: all that trouble with her young 'uns, not to mention their pesky Cousin Ozzy. And does that idle loaf of a father lift a finger to help? Does he heck! He's far too interested in nipping off to the oilshop with his mates! That Bobby is the only one with his polish on the right way round — if it wasn't for him I don't know what would happen.

Do y'know what those five pesky young 'uns did the other day? Well, poor Mrs Bearing was out at the shops, just getting the shopping for the week when that rascal Barnaby — he's trouble that one — decided to go for an adventure. Now, she did say 'Don't go outside of Technofear' so what do they go and do? Straight out and got lost in the Metaplanes! Honestly, I ask you. My sympathy is with her. That nice young lad Bobby had to go out and rescue them. You know what it's like out there — all them mean 'n' nasty bearings that eat the young 'uns. Of course he found them, had to push each one of them back individually to the Gates of Technofear before they shut at curfew time.

Now that Bobby has gone off to College I don't know what she'll do. But I did hear that she's going to employ a full time Bearing minder, but with a family like that to look after, all them applicants have to pass a test.

Fancy applying for the job? What you have to do is to guide the apprentice Bearing along these lines of the Metaplanes until you reach a lost child. Not as easy as all that though — some of the lines lead to the Evil Bearings who will kill you if you encounter them. What you have to do is to tell Mrs Bearing which lines, lettered A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, J, K, lead to her lost family. If you think you can managed some Bearing minding, fill in the application form and send it to: Mrs Bearing, c/o ZZAP! TOWERS, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire. SY8 1DB

The first 50 correct applicants will go on to play Bobby Bearing — the simulation — from those helpful people down at the Bearing minding agency — The Edge. All the application forms must be on by the 31st of December.

APPLICATION FORM

Dear Mrs Bearing,
I would like to apply for the post of Bearing Minder, I've completed the test and the five routes that lead to your sons are:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

I understand that I am completely and utterly mad to undertake the care of a family such as yours.

Yours Sincerely

Name ....

Address ....

....

....

.... **Postcode** ....

ZZAP! READERS' TOP 30 DECEMBER 1986

CHART VOTING DRAW WINNERS
WINNER (£40 worth of software plus ZZAP! T-Shirt): **Hadyn Freebury**, Caldicot, NP6 4EN
RUNNERS UP (ZZAP! T-Shirt and Cap): **Steven Porteous**, Falkirk FK5 4UD; **Steven Ledsham**, Runcorn WA7 6AA; **Stephen Butterfield**, Havercroft WF4 2PJ; **Darren McLean**, Durrington BN13 2SD

1 *(1)* **LEADER BOARD** *(10%)*
US Gold/Access, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 97%

2 *(4)* **GREEN BERET** *(9%)*
Imagine, £8.95 cass
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 93%

3 *(-)* **SUPER CYCLE** *(9%)*
US Gold/Epyx, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 95%

4 *(2)* **GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS** *(8%)*
Elite, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 97%

5 *(3)* **INTERNATIONAL KARATE** *(6%)*
System 3, £6.50 cass, £10.99 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 91%

6 *(7)* **SLAMBALL** *(5%)*
Americana, £2.99 cass, £4.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 96%

7*(6)* **MERCENARY** *(5%)*
Novagen, £9.95 cass, £12.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 98%

8 *(5)* **URIDIUM** *(4%)*
Hewson, £8.95 cass, £12.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 94%

9 *(8)* **KNIGHT GAMES** *(4%)*
English Software, £8.95 cass, £12.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 90%

10 *(9)* **SPINDIZZY** *(4%)*
Electric Dreams, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 98%

11 *(28)* **PARALLAX**
Ocean, £8.95 cass
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 93%

12 *(13)* **CAULDRON II**
Palace Software, £8.95 cass
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 94%

13 *(15)* **DRAGON'S LAIR**
Software Projects, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 69%

14 *(12)* **SUMMER GAMES II**
US Gold/Epyx, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 97%

15 *(14)* **WINTER GAMES**
US Gold/Epyx, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 94%

16 *(11)* **THRUST**
Firebird, £1.99 cass
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 94%

17 *(10)* **PARADROID**
Hewson, £7.95 cass, £12.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 97%

18 *(18)* **TAU CETI**
CRL, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 93%

19 *(19)* **ELITE**
Firebird, £14.95 cass, £17.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 95%

20 *(16)* **BOUNDER**
Gremlin Graphics, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 97%

21 *(-)* **DAN DARE**
Virgin, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 94%

22 *(21)* **SPELLBOUND**
MAD (Mastertronic), £2.99 cass
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 94%

23 *(17)* **SUPERBOWL**
Ocean, £9.95 cass
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 90%

24 *(22)* **THE EIDOLON**
Activision/Lucasfilm, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 97%

25 *(29)* **STARQUAKE**
Bubble Bus, £8.95 cass
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 93%

26 *(20)* **COMMANDO**
Elite, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 77%

27 *(23)* **KUNG-FU MASTER**
US Gold, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 79%

28 *(-)* **DRUID**
Firebird, £7.95 cass
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 88%

29 *(-)* **ALLEYKAT**
Hewson, £8.95 cass, £12.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 89%

30 *(-)* **HACKER II**
Activision, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 88%

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I am voting for the following five games:

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THE ZZAP



Of EGOs and IDiots

Earthlings are indeed strange creatures. I have come to realise that the sole motive force for most members of the retarded species is provided by their egos — a part of their mental makeup which spurs them on to perform a range of uncomfortable tasks. No sentient lifeform would voluntarily spend hours practicing some dull unamusing sport such as golf merely to win the adulation of its fellows, but humanoids have a basic drive to be well thought of by complete strangers. Hence their devotion to strange, unrewarding pass-times and the very existence of an annual directory such as the Guinness Book of Records.

I gained first-hand experience of this phenomenon when I was forced to study Penn and Rignall in much greater detail than I would have wished. Why such miserable specimens should have been chosen to act as assessors of computer games remains a mystery to me — but I was assigned the task of organising competitions of game-playing prowess and had little choice but to work with the low quality assistants with which I was provided.

You may remember the early eagerness of these strangely coiffured specimens when it came to taking on readers in the challenges I organised many months ago. It has now become clear to me that they saw the Challenges I issued as a way of demonstrating their self-assumed mastery of the joystick. Until they began to lose to my worthy challengers, that is.

Now that the satisfaction of publicly defeating other members of the human race has been denied them, Penn and Rignall refuse to take on my champions. Their egos are not rewarded by defeat, and natural cowardice combines with the threat of damage to their self image. They point-blank refuse to run the risk of defeat.

Such is the mystery of human ego. It expands as it rises but deflates like an eviscerated Hontorian Bubblemouse with the first defeat.

I am displeased by the fact that I am no longer to be treated to the humiliation of an 'undefeated' reviewer champion. Rignall's squirmings in the throes of apparently impending defeat were most satisfying. I am condemned, it seems, to selecting pairs of readers to enter the Challenge arena. Maybe it is as well — the damage done to my biocircuits by Rignall and Penn when they snatched victory from the jaws of defeat in earlier challenges cannot be repaired by my onboard mediputer. I will have to wait for a total refit in a fully equipped medicentre on my home planet before I once again become my complete self.

I sense a worrying tinge of softness entering my personality. The ravages of chlorine ions no doubt contribute to by bio-physical decay. Perhaps a short holiday and a few rounds of Screamfly is in order. Particularly if I could smuggle Penn and Rignall into a game as the object beings and practice my technique. A cheering thought.

But to the nature of the current challenge. The thrills and spills of motor racing make a pleasant change from tedious Earth 'sports' such as golf — at least spectators are occasionally treated to the spectacle of fresh blood being spilt. So it is Super Cycle that I select, and my Challenge computer discovers two readers who claim competence at the game.

Another Londoner's name is provided — this time a lad from Grenwich by the name of Marcus Bellew who has evidently crammed a considerable quantity of joystick hours into his fourteen Earth-years of existence. My databank reveals that he has achieved a score of 220,000 on the game I intend to issue the Challenge upon. A keen Sanxion player, he also admits to achieving Level Three. He is summoned to appear in Ludlow . . .

A second challenger is suggested by my computational companion. A certain Hywel Dennicks who is currently domiciled in Llanelli (an impenetrably spelt location which I learn is in the country of Wales.) Hywel is keen on INFOCOM adventures and is on record as having achieved a score of 124,000 on Super Cycle. An interesting contender, given his twelve Earth-years of experience.

The day is set, the arrangements made and I wait in Ludlow for the arrival of the challengers. It is sad that my efforts are confined to the arena of computer games playing. How much more entertaining it would be to hold the challenge on the Isle of Man and mount these aspiring champions on large and powerful motorcycles then watch them duel to a painful and dramatic death. But this is mere fantasy. Even the most excessive of human egos would not allow its puny physical host to go to such extremes . . .

It seems the Challengers are in need of moral support for their contest, for both arrive in the midst of an entourage of friends, relatives and companions. Marcus is accompanied by a cousin — a certain Joanne Smith, while Hywel brings a companion by the name of Kristian Edmunds. The corners of the ZZAP! offices are soon filled with supporting relatives and the room appears full. This is the first challenge to be conducted in front of an audience of any appreciable size and the presence of so many supporters adds an air of drama and tension to the proceedings.

Both combatants enter the arena with their personal joysticks — the mark of serious games players. Hywel is happiest persuing elusive High Scores when he has a Euromax Arcade in his hand and although he arrives with one arm in plaster, he seems undaunted by his recent injury and confident of success. Marcus, who shows no signs of recent biophysical damage, clutches a Fantastick and is clearly a little perturbed by the plaster cast on his opponent's limb. Could this be a cunning ploy — is Hywel so confident that he feels he must have one arm metaphorically tied behind his back? Will his medical encumbrance effect his gameplay or is it all a sham, to un-nerve his opponent? An interesting example of Gamesmanship, perhaps . . .

I have already decided the format for the Challenge before the contestants and their followers arrive and spend a few moments explaining what I expect of the day. A tape version of Super Cycle is to be used to determine the outcome, and the best of three games will decide the victor. A race against the clock is appropriate, and each player must endeavour to race through all eleven levels as rapidly as possible.

As the loading times for each successive level remain constant, a running total of the minutes and seconds is to be kept by the unkempt Rignall who appears as if he has slept for several weeks on a building site. With the outline rules explained, there is little more to do other than to arrange for copious quantities of heated brown liquid to be supplied to the spectators and allow the sport to commence.

The first level of the inaugural game is completed rapidly — timers are started as each contestant presses the fire button on his joystick and there is very little to choose between them at the end of the first track. Hywel has conceded a small advantage to Marcus — finishing in one minute eleven seconds, taking eight seconds longer to pass the finish line. This could be a pure ploy, however, to lull his opponent into believing that the arm is truly broken and represents a hindrance. A few moments reflection is provided while the second track loads from tape and the combatants eye each other warily. This has the makings of an entertaining period of time.

The second level is plain sailing for Marcus, who manoeuvres delicately between the other riders on the track and completes the circuit cleanly in three minutes and fifteen seconds. Hywel has some difficulty, however, and seems to have lost the technique for moving smoothly through the gearbox. He changes into second rather awkwardly, corners badly and narrowly avoids a crash on the second bend. He trails Marcus by eighteen seconds at the end of the level.

Marcus continues to ride smoothly and elegantly in the next level and is close to completing it when he crashes into the back of another bike and loses much time to limp in with a time of five minutes forty-two seconds. Hywel

CHALLENGE CHAL



Marcus Bellew towers over the bespectacled Hywel Dennicks who grimaces for the camera while Kristian Edmunds looks rather bemused . . .

sees his opportunity to close the temporal gap but the opportunity proves a distraction for he, too, crashes into the rear of another rider after five minutes and eight seconds and takes twenty-seven seconds longer than Marcus to finish the ride.

The bonus level follows and Hywel is still have difficulty when it comes to changing gear — he doesn't start very well and has difficulty in making the most efficient use of he gears. Eight minutes and twenty seconds have elapsed by the time he rides over the white line. Marcus has a problem-free ride, but loses some of his lead, coming in to complete the lap after seven minutes and forty-nine seconds have passed in total. Hywel has dropped a further four seconds behind, and begins to look worried.

It is yet early days though, and there is plenty of opportunity for tactical play. I have spent some time attempting to recharge my craving for violence by watching your primitive Earthling contact sport of wrestling and have noticed that lulling an opponent into a false sense of security is a vital element. I refuse to be drawn into Hywel's ruse and await the commencement of the fifth level with an open mind . . .

My mind is a little less open at the end of the next circuit. Hywel



Stroking the keyboard for luck is apparently an ancient Welsh custom for attracting luck, as Hywel demonstrates for Cameron's lens

fails to master gearchanges, crashes into a lump in the road and then hits a bollard square on and limps home after eleven minutes and thirteen seconds have elapsed. Marcus crashes twice — into bollards and then into a lamppost — but manages to widen his lead to forty five seconds . . .

Level six sees Marcus hit the ice after a total loss of control, but he romps over the finish with twelve minutes and fifty seconds showing on his timing device. Hywel avoids a crash but allows Marcus to build up a full sixty second lead, coming in after thirteen minutes and fifty seconds have elapsed.

Riding on ice is obviously not a strong point for Marcus — he crashes again on the seventh level and looks distinctly peeved, finishing after fifteen minutes and twenty seconds. One crash also slows Hywel down, but he pares eleven seconds off the lead that Marcus has so far maintained. Marcus adds another twelve seconds to his lead.

The penultimate level, and Hywel is clearly in serious trouble. Or is he? Fidgeting with the volume control on his monitor while the track loads he mutters that the lighting in the room is distracting him. Maybe he intends to pull something spectacular out of the hat . . . or could be be following the example of wrestlers who lull their ringmates into over-confidence by deliberately taking falls? The next two levels might make matters clearer. . . .

Marcus skids on the straight and crashes into a telegraph pole thirty seconds after he begins — is he un-nerved? Recovering quickly he manages to add another second to his massive lead before the final, eleventh lap begins. There is little hope for Hywel unless Marcus makes a succession of disastrous errors ... and he may have become over-confident. Marcus



Looking rather like he's just been dragged around a building site, the repulsive Rignall dominates the foreground as Hywel warms up watched by Kristian

Could he be about to stage a dramatic comeback?

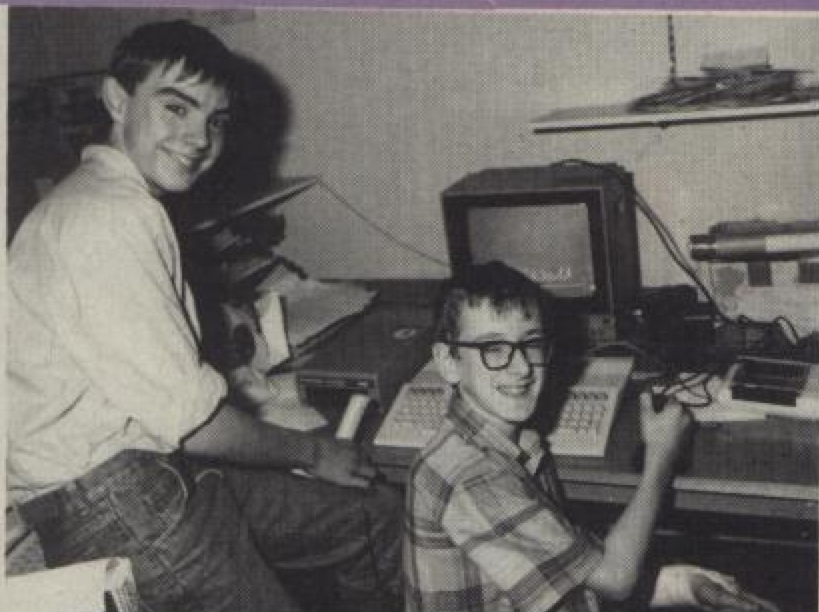
Both riders complete the bonus level without crashing but Marcus manages to pull off a particularly slick ride — perhaps spurred by Hywel's momentary flurry of aggressive action — and increases his lead by four seconds.

Level Nine sees Hywel crash into a bollard and then ricochet off another bike. Marcus crashes after taking a corner with a little too much speed on the clock and then he also bounces into the side of another bike. In the end, Hywel's cumbersome gear changes bring him in to the end of the level twenty-one minutes and four seconds after he first pressed fire and finds himself doing some rapid dodging and then crashes into a post. A few seconds later he runs into the back of another bike and crashes again and so far Hywel has had a trouble free ride . . . Could Marcus be losing his nerve?

Clearly not. Marcus ends the first game after twenty four minutes and fifty eight seconds of hard riding, while Hywel trails in fifty nine seconds later.

Sighs of relief emanate from the audience — they have been called upon to witness a long and hard fought battle of almost half an hour. I instruct the unkempt Rignall to remove the spectators from the office and purchase quantities of fried foodstuffs for them all at a local cafe. I take the opportunity to

LENGE CHALLENGE



Smiles of easy confidence cross the faces of both Challengers before they begin the race to determine who shall be known as Victor. (Who's Victor anyway? asks Rignall in the background . . .)

plug into he mediputer once more and watch a holovideo of motorcyle crashes to refresh my mind for the afternoon's on-screen combat.

After a pleasant repast, the Challengers and their supporters return, the timers are zeroed and battle begins once more. Hywel completes the first course in one minute eleven seconds without crashing, seven seconds behind Marcus. On the second lap Hywel corners rather too fast and collides with a cactus for his sins while Marcus storms through with no unpleasant incidents to his record, building his lead up to thirty one seconds.

It is time Hywel played a master card or two if he is bluffing Marcus. A shortly after starting Level Three Marcus slides off the course as a result of going round a bend too fast — a sign of over-confidence? And again Marcus attempts to travel round a corner too rapidly, this time colliding with a tree. Hywel manages a 'clear round' and ends up a mere twelve seconds behind Marcus.

Neither competitor crashes on the bonus track but Marcus builds his lead up to twenty one seconds, crossing the finish after a total time of seven minutes and fifty-nine seconds. The fifth level begins badly for Marcus — he bounces off the side of another rider and smashes into a lamp-post but rides safely for a while thereafter. Hywel crashes once and also takes things a little more carefully. Prudence is becoming the order of this contest. Then Marcus crashes into the back of two tightly packed bikes — and Hywel feels obliged to crash too! Yet another crash for Marcus, but he finishes the level in the lead — two collisions with cones see Hywel trailing by a massive fifty seconds.

Hywel avoids a collision in the next level, unlike Marcus and regains some time — cutting the lead down to thirty eight seconds and finishing after thirteen minutes and forty-eight seconds. On the seventh level lamp-posts prove to be a major problem for both riders — Marcus hits one after cornering too fast and then runs ino the back of another bike, while Hywel skids on oil and ends up connected to a lamp-post twice! Hywel trails by almost fifty one seconds.

Bonus time again, and the eighth level is completed without untoward incidents by both Challengers — Hywel pulls back a little, ending up forty four seconds behind after eighteen minutes and forty-two seconds riding. Things are looking grim with only three tracks left to ride. If he is to throw aside his plaster cast and surprise his opponent, now is the moment!

With arm remaining firmly in plaster, Hywel proceeds to corner too fast and crash into a rock. Marcus also crashes off the roadway but seems quietly confident at this late stage of the game. A little too confident, for he slides on the bollard stage, but after Hywel has got on the wrong side of the bollards and crashed into a post, the time differential has increased to a massive one minute and eleven seconds at the end of the level.

Little can save Hywel now, except a sudden Ludlow powercut which he might be able to turn to his advantage, claiming a null game. Both riders are involved in nasty accidents during the penultimate round, but Marcus is almost assured of victory as he builds his lead up to one minute and thirty-six seconds.

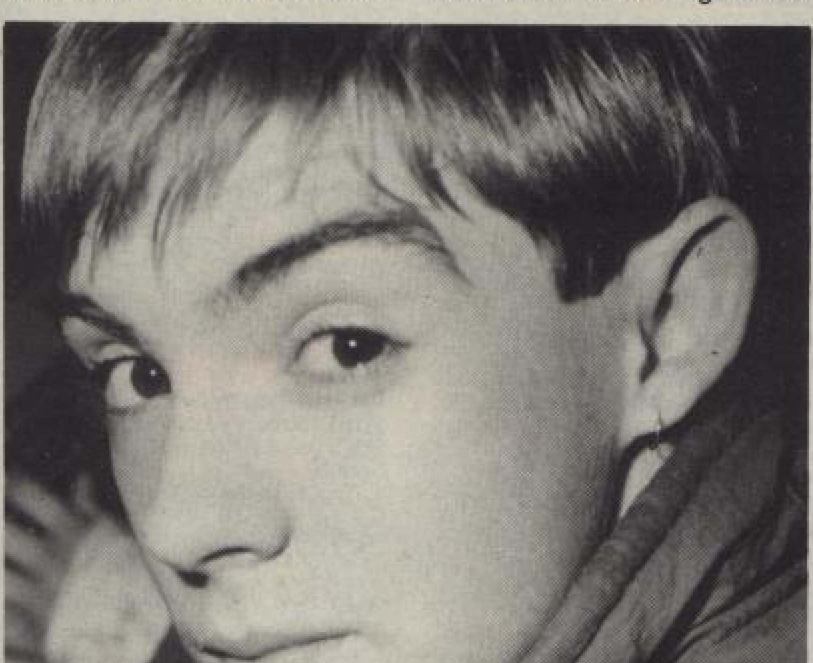
It is all but over. By the time he starts the eleventh level Hywel has certainly lost the Challenge unless Marcus decides to play to the audience and lose deliberately . . .

But these Grenwich lads play to win, and win is what Marcus clearly does with an overall time of twenty five minutes and fifteen seconds. Gamely, Hywel rides on, cutting down the overall lead built up by the vanquisher to forty-five seconds.

Polite pleasantries are exchanged by the two supporting factions before they leave Ludlow, but there's bound to be a lament in the valleys following this son of Harlech's defeat. . . .



A tense moment (Ludlow school of minimalist photocaptions)



Marcus peers deeply into the camera lens as if trying to discover some fundamental truth about life, the universe and playing SUPER CYCLE

ALLEYKAT (Hewson)
4,429,400 John Doyle, Kilmarnock, Ayrshire
2,615,050 C Dawson, Heap Bridge, Bury
2,609,150 David Booth, Riddings, Derby

ACE (Cascade)
83,380 M Horsey, Waltham Abbey, Kent
26,890 John Doyle, Kilmarnoch, Ayrshire
25,300 James Duffy, Cheylesmore, Coventry

BOMB JACK (Elite)
1,248,000 Hatti Jarvelin, Oulu 14, Finland
441,100 Andrew Maddison, Coventry
407,980 Chris Gues, Weymouth, Dorset

CAULDRON II (Palace)
1,508,550 Cliff Nobresa, St Helier, Jersey
153,750 John Reynolds, Duxford, Cambridge
132,400 Shaun Russell, Shildon, Co Durham

DRAGON'S LAIR (Software Projects)
30,910 Martin Cayle, Clifton, Notts
24,767 Adam Turvey, Sidcup, Kent
23,817 Steve Quinnell, London SE9

DAN DARE (Virgin)
6796 David Sullivan, Heywood, Lancs
6345 Graham Lamb, Maidstone, Kent
6228 Carlo Iacono, St Albans, Herts

ENCOUNTER (Novagen)
1,888,000 Me, Crewe, Cheshire
1,135,500 Stephen Blidgeon, Wythenshawe, Manchester
649,900 Andy Clifford, Aylestone, Leicester

FLOYD THE DROID (Ariolasoft)
4,920 M J Lenton, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs

FIST II (Melbourne House
59,200 Gary Penn, ZZAP! Towers

FIST II TOURNAMENT (Melbourne House)
1,012,900 Gary Penn, ZZAP! Towers.

GRIBBLY'S DAY OUT (Hewson)
62,899 Peter Evans, Aberporth, Dyfed
15,729 Tim Veal, Portishead, Bristol
24,776 Steve Lee, Guildford, Surrey

GREEN BERET (Imagine)
1,059,870 Martin/Jon Black, Sheffield
755,800 John White, Whitefield, Manchester
626,260 Robert Thys, Philip Smith

GHOSTS AND GOBLINS (Elite)
180,000 Billy Jenkins, Warrington, Cheshire
128,300 Paul Hodgson, Holland Moor, Lancs
126,500 Neil Shumsky, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire

HERCULES (Alpha/Omega)
560,910 G Beddows, Rugeley, Staffs
511,080 Scott Carstairs, Paisley, Renfrewshire
258,110 Alex Maxwell, Uckfield, E Sussex

INTERNATIONAL KARATE (System 3)
306,750 Godalming, Surrey
302,000 Shazad Iqbal, Bury, Lancs
234,800 Ian Foster, Milnsbridge, Huddersfield

IRIDIS ALPHA (Llamasoft)
103,620 A Phare, Marldon, Paignton

KUNG FU MASTER (US Gold)
4,385,990 Stephen Pennel, Fordingbridge, Hants
3,802,983 Andrew Dallyn, Braughton, Devon
1,519,446 Henry Gibney, London N7

KORONIS RIFT (Activsion)
128,780 Mark Tortolano, Stirling, Scotland
96,430 Colin Burroughs, Ipswich, Suffolk



It will soon be that time of year when you humans present each other with gifts wrapped in processed plants. A strange but profitable ritual. This time of year also sees the release of several new games, so I am expecting an equally large number of new scores! Remember, I am still monitoring all your scores in preparation for the grand ZZAP! CHALLENGE CHAMPIONHIP play-off. Perhaps you consider yourself to be a potential ZZAP! champion? If so, send your scores to me — I am waiting.

THE SCORELORD SPEAKETH

KNIGHT GAMES (English Software)
TOTAL:
65,170 Chris Maclean, Helsby, Cheshire
65,120 Michael Smith, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland
64,275 Damian Aubrey, Pendeford, Wolverhampton

LEADER BOARD (US Gold)
NOVICE
-24 Victor Gordon, Co Armagh, N Ireland
-22 Steve Forshaw, Gosforth, Newcastle Upon Tyne
-19 David Barker, Feltham, Middx

AMATEUR
-3 Paul Hodgson, Holland Moor, Lancs

PROFESSIONAL
-21 Tom McKee, Dingwall, Ross-shire
-19 A J Lowery, Chorley, Lancs
-17 Russell Williams, Sydney, Australia

LAW OF THE WEST (US Gold)
9,650 Svein Kierstad, 6017 Asetranda, Norway
7,187 M J Lenton, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs

MERCENARY: THE SECOND CITY (Novagen)
523,981cr Raymond Catalan, Ruislip, Middx

MISSION AD (Odin)
49,320 Anon, Bearwood, Bournemouth
21,560 Steven Towle, Grimsby, S Humbs
18,990 Leroy Ames, Norwich, norfolk

NOMAD (Ocean)
175,745 M J Lenton, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs
4,065 Paul Want, Harrogate, N Yorks
3,885 Paul Tudor, Stourbridge, Pedmore

PARADROID (Hewson)
201,845 Andrew Mackay, Liverpool 18
175,892 B Mainwaring, Stoke on Trent
116,945 Andy Clifford, Aylestone, Leicester

PING PONG (Imagine)
57,040 Barrie Hallett, Lawrence Weston, Bristol
51,300 Anoosh Lachin, London W13

PHANTOMS OF THE ASTEROID (Mastertronic)
561,412 M A Grist, Reading, Berks
286,064 Chris Napier, Long Marston, Herts
211,103 Andrew Crofts, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham

PARALLAX (Ocean)
78,400 Adam Pracy, Newton Flotman, Norwich
66,480 J Macmanus, Barnstaple, Devon
58,400 Tim Austin, Bush bank, Hereford

ROCK 'N' WRESTLE (Melbourne House)
842,480 Jamie Ford, Southampton
821,400 John White, Whitefield, Manchester

RAMBO (Ocean)
6,659,000 Neil Haydock, Denton, Manchester
5,197,000 Gavin Burnett, Westhill, Inverness
2,691,200 David Connor, Aintree, Liverpool L30

RAGING BEAST (Firebird)
104,374 Paul Ellis, Barnehurst, Kent
67,092 Matthew Minshull, Great Barr, Birmingham
63,883 Matthew Dodd, Braunstone, Leicester

SUPER CYCLE (Epyx/US Gold)
256,200 Julain Rignall, ZZAP! Towers
236,040 John Chasey, Cheshunt, Herts

SCARABAEUS (Ariolasoft)
277,824 Robert Berry, Fleetwood, Lancs
273,744 Douglas Clark, Carstairs Junction, Lanark
256,128 Luis Troyano, Stockport, Cheshire

SABOTEUR (Durell)
$395,000 Ged and Jim, Huddersfield, W Yorks
$208,200 Adrian king, Swindon, Wilts
$99,999 Julian Smith, Sheffield

STARQUAKE (Bubble Bus)
287,763 Nigel Froud, Godalming, Surrey
273,667 Per Kjellander, Stenungsund, Sweden
255,902 Ove Knudsen, 5033 Fyllingsdalen, Norway

SPINDIZZY (Electric Dreams)
JEWELS COLLECTED
100% Mark Lietch, Norwich, Norfolk
100% Ross Macdonald, Blackburn, W Lothian

SLAMBALL (Americana)
4,684,710 Martin Dalton, Rochester, Kent
4,593,910 Ian George, Cambridge
4,565,200 Philip Lisa-Webster Appleyard, Withernsea, E Yorks

SILENT SERVICE (US Gold
(TONS SUNK)
146,250 Duncan Burke, Calverley, Leeds
72,100 Steve Quinell, London, SE9

SPLIT PERSONALITIES (Domark)
633,200 Mrs L Hayden, London E16
404,700 Rob Brown, Portobello, Edinburgh
382,100 LH Madsen, Vejle, Denmark

THRUST (Firebird)
1,103,800 Arlo Swinson, Doncaster, S Yorks
715,400 Sean Bartropp, Hockley, Essex
474,380 Chris Smith, Silver Range Manager, Firebird

TAU CETI (CRL)
20,465 Robert Elliot, Middlesbrough, Cleveland
20,440 Shaun Russell, Shildon, Co Durham
20,260 G Sampson, London E15

TRAP (Alligata)
481,900 Lawry Simm, Liverpool L23
429,510 Colin Bayne, Glenrothes, Fife
328,500 Robert Elliot, Middlesborough, Cleveland

TOY BIZARRE (Activision)
102,900 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers

URIDIUM (Hewson)
3,820,020 David Horsburgh, Uddington, Glasgow
3,428,985 Andrew Mackay, Liverpool 18
1,183,610 Kim E Kjer, 2860 Soborg, Denmark

V (Ocean)
24,600 D A Ashcroft, Wirral, Cheshire
21,200 Danny Pratt, Southampton
21,100 John Doyle, Kilmarnoch, Ayrshire

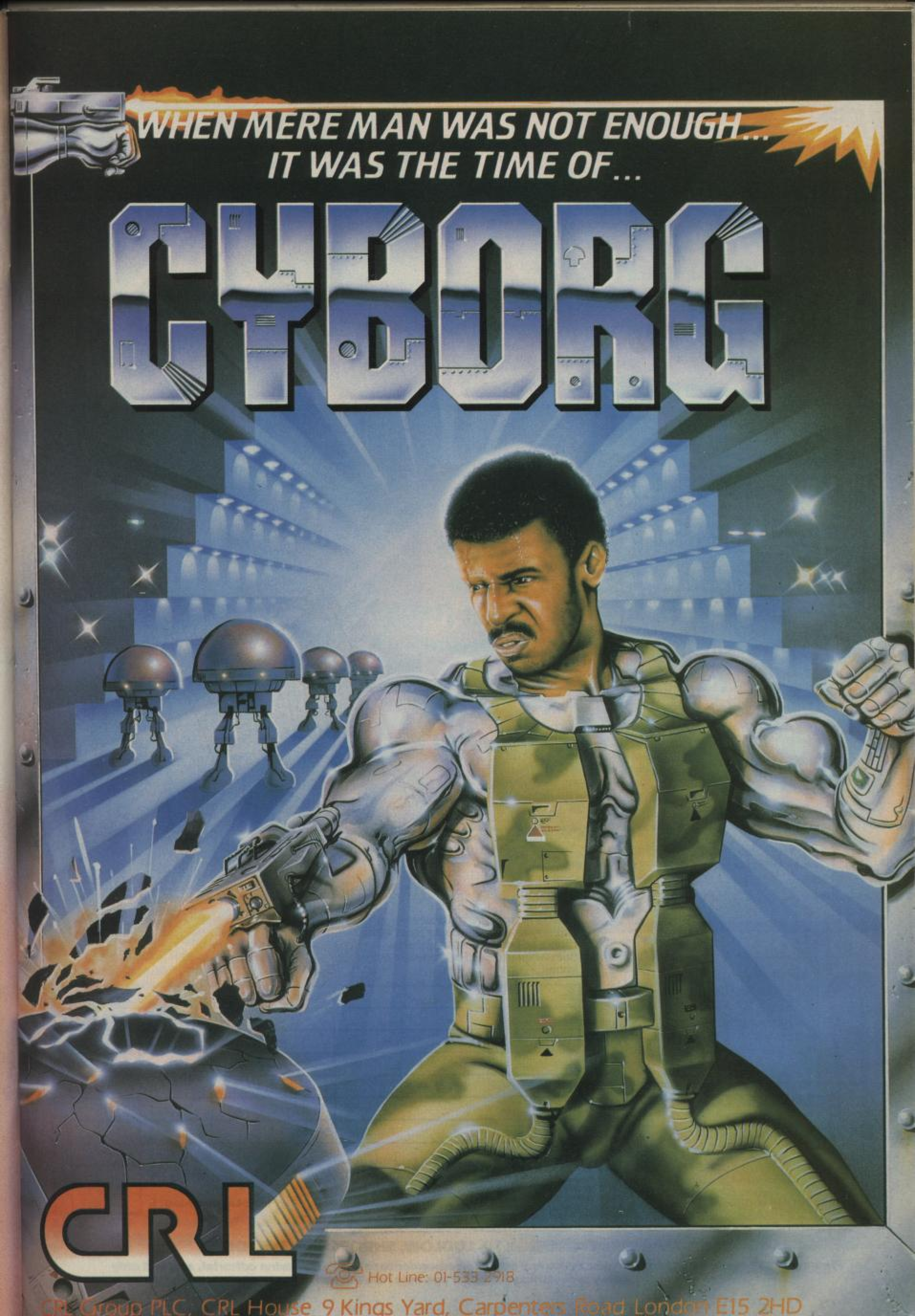
WARHAWK (Firebird)
1,251,157 Nick Marshall, Nowhere
1,225,039 Jonathan Kendall, Norwich, Norfolk
1,128,726 Mick Law, Blackburn, Lancs

WAR (Martech)
14,649 Ali Kerswell, Guildford, Surrey

WIZARD'S LAIR (Bubble Bus)
152,735 Steven Medcraft, Rayleigh, Essex

YIE AR KUNG FU (Imagine)
152,260,000 Scott Gracen, Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear
92,432,400 Riaz Reshamwala, London NW4
60,200,700 Jamie Ford, Southampton

Z (Rhino)
232,000 Anand Aggorwal, Rushden, Northants
187,300 Mark Taylor, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex


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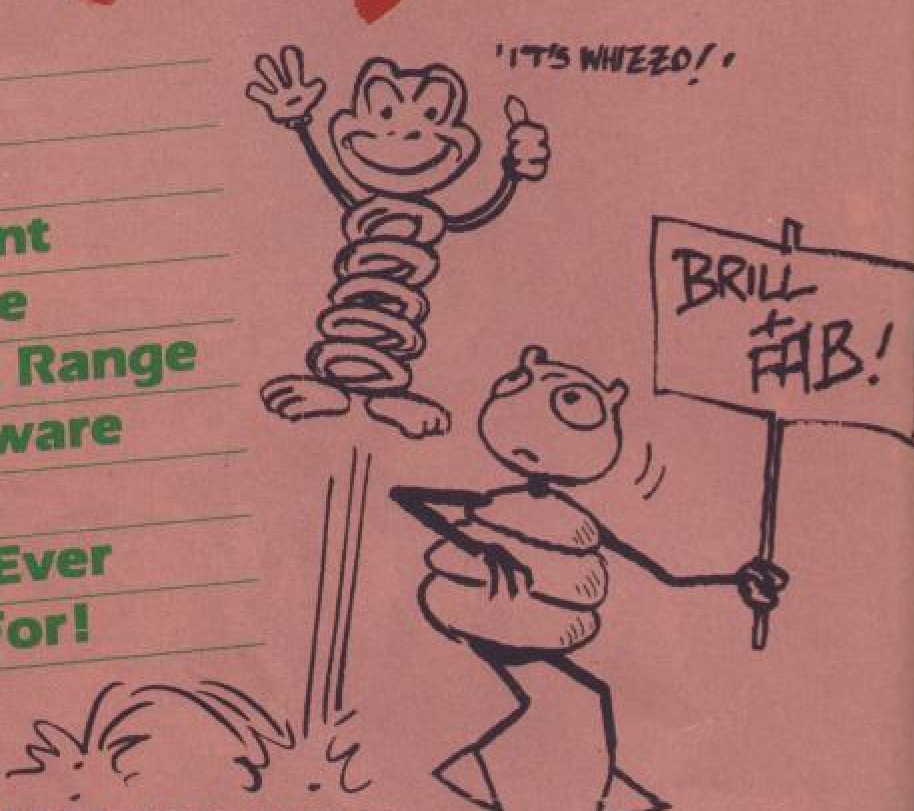
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So you're a star when it comes to flying space fighters: it doesn't mean you can get away with 'borrowing' ships and taking girlfriends out to view the surface of the local moon. You've been warned before about transgressing regulations, this time I have to teach you a lesson. Transferred to Lightforce. Go!

The punishment fleet. Picking up a few personal belongings, you enter the shuttle and are transferred across base to the Lightforce command. Lightforce pilots get all the messy, unpleasant and particularly dangerous missions. The idea is, seeing as they're all criminals, it doesn't too much matter if they get rubbed out. Survive a tour of duty and your 'Debt to Society' is wiped out and all the criminal records are erased from your file. Die during duty and there are no medals, no memorial services. Just a short Ethercast announcing that another criminal element has perished in attonement for his sins and a short Ethergram from the government to your next of kin announcing your death.

It's almost as if the Lightforce Command deliberately stacks the odds against internees — they're rarely sent out as a squadron. As you soon find out.

Aliens have invaded a small, but strategically important planetary system and someone needs to clear them out. You get volunteered, and have to pilot a fighter over a series of terrains eradicating the alien horde. No easy task, but there's no way the Lightforce Command are going to be smugly sending that Ethergram, you decide, clambering into the cockpit of the heavily armed craft. No way. . . .

LIGHTFORCE is the first game on **Gargoyle**'s new FASTER THAN LIGHT arcade label. This fast and furious vertically-scrolling shoot en up has already made a big impression on both the Spectrum and Amstrad — and looks set to do the same on the 64. Now you could collect a copy, absolutely free, and find out whether you have 'The Right Stuff' to survive life in the punishment wing. And the lucky First Prize winner collects a 1541 Disk Drive too . . .

An agile, alert mind is needed, so here are a few questions to ponder over. Get your answers in to **LIGHTFORCE APPLICATIONS, ZZAP! Towers, PO BOX 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB** making sure they arrive on the back of a postcard or envelope before 31st December. Good luck, pilot!

1) What is the speed of light in a vacuum?

2) What is the speed of light in water?

3) What are the constituent colours of white light?

4) What does L.A.S.E.R. stand for?

5) What theoretical particle could travel faster than light?

30 Copies of LIGHT FORCE also up for grabs!

STRATEGICALLY SPEAKING



OUT OF THE BLUE

Sooner or later, there comes a time when you have to eat your words. Well, I've got to do just that. After last month's bijou fanfare announcing the return of the strategy column, I've now got to tell you that this is the last one I'll be doing. Things have changed since last issue and I have decided to seek pastures new, as it were. I'm off . . . No doubt a lot of people are going to be happy about that but for those of you who share interested in this part of the hobby, I'm sorry. C'est la vie!

The Commodore 64 has more to offer strategy freaks than any other home micro both in terms of quality and the quantity of strategy and role playing software. But then, you already know that. The situation will no doubt continue to improve as software houses look for more ways to find diversity in their product lines. Unfortunately, too few people in our side of the business care or understand how important this will be in the future.

Strategy and role playing gamers are far more devoted to their interest than the average computer gamer. They deserve good coverage but rarely get such. I wouldn't worry. There will always be pure strategy, sure. But games in general will become more complex and harder to pigeonhole as time goes on. Look at this month's Gold Medal as a prime example. It's reviewed in the main part of the mag because it needs several opinions to put the uniqueness of the product into context. It doesn't really fit into any easily definable area. QED.

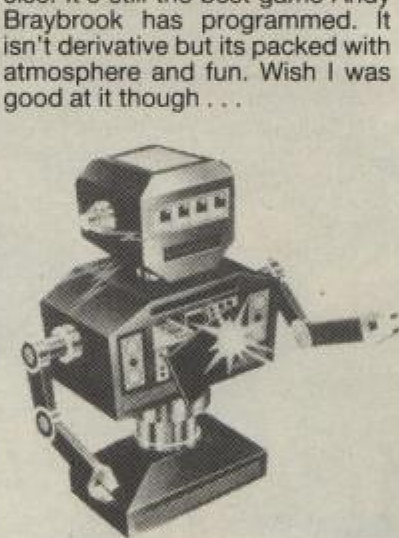
Perhaps if I can offer parting advice, never buy a strategy game from anywhere other than a specialist shop. They're far more likely to understand both the good and bad points of a product and won't be too concerned with hard sell because they are more concerned with your long term custom. Here's to the stimulation of the imagination . . . and the future.
SEAN MASTERSON

. . MY FAVOURITE THINGS

After some consultation with the erstwhile editor, Mr Penn, I've decided to finish off by outlining my all time top ten games on the Commodore. These aren't all strategy games, after all, too much of a good thing can spoil you. They are all a great deal of fun. But then again, my ideas of a good game aren't exactly what most people would expect . . . If I were asked to do the same thing six months from now, I'd probably pick different games. There are so many more I would have liked to include in this list but we can't have everything in life, I suppose. So, in the finest tradition of pointless and arbitrary evaluation, here they are in reverse order.

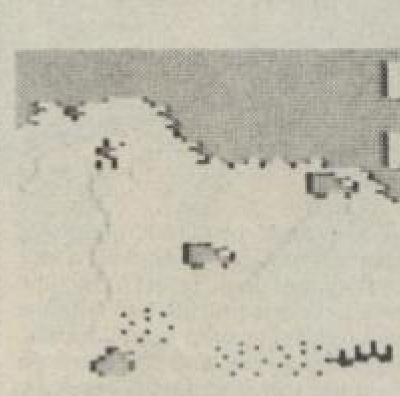
PARADROID (Hewson)

Of all the arcade games I've come across during my time with ZZAP!, this was one of the most interesting and compulsive. '• was also one of the very first quality games I saw on the Commodore. I still enjoy it now, though more for its nostalgic qualities than anything else. It's still the best game Andy Braybrook has programmed. It isn't derivative but its packed with atmosphere and fun. Wish I was good at it though . . .



DECISION IN THE DESERT (US Gold/Microprose)

This was my second wargame review for ZZAP!, the first being *Crusade in Europe*. I realise now that I thoroughly underestimated both games. They are well presented and documented wargames that the novice and veteran player alike can really get into — absolutely packed with good stuff. This is still my favourite of the Microprose wargames.

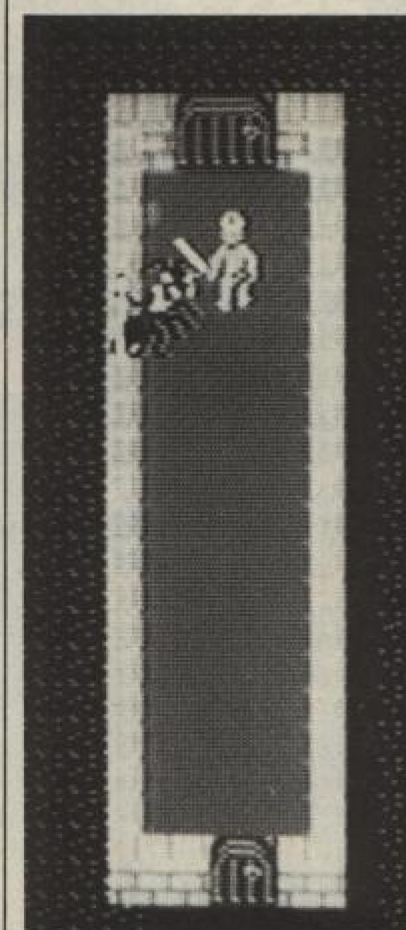


STARCROSS (Infocom)

Said to be the hardest of all the Infocom games, this one took me six months to complete. It's heavily based on ideas from Arthur C Clarke and Larry Niven, two of my favourite SF authors. The scientific authenticity of the game coupled with the most devious puzzles I've ever encountered in an adventure have imprinted memories of frustrated keyboard bashing on my mind forever. As Ash once said about the Alien, 'I admire its purity.'

TEMPLE OF APSHAI TRILOGY (US Gold/Epyx)

For role players, this game has to represent not only outstanding value for money, but also a tremendous challenge. The character design works well but, more importantly, the dungeon designs are excellent. SSI have also had some good RPGs out, but this is still my favourite. The rules booklet alone is crammed with background material. Several months worth of good old hack 'n' slay for everyone.



KORONIS RIFT (Activision/Epyx/Lucasfilm)

If there has ever been a case of an arcade adventure approaching pure science fiction, then this is it. Most of the team preferred *The Eidolon* of all the Lucasfilm games but the concept of this game was what grabbed me, apart from its evidently spotless implementation. If I were to be alive a few hundred years from now, a Techno-scavenger would be my one ambition in life. Roll up, the wonders of the universe . . .

GERMANY 1985 (US Gold/SSI)

There are as many visions of the apocalypse as there are different shapes of cornflakes in a 160

gramme packet. This is one of the more unlikely ones as it does not necessarily envisage the use of nuclear weaponry. In a way, that idea makes it a more dangerous concept. In a nuclear war, we would all die — sooner or later. But in a conventional war, the consequences of the outcome could be far more miserable than death itself. This is a game that scared me.

THE PAWN (Rainbird/Magnetic Scrolls)

In fact there are several other adventure and role playing games I prefer to this one. The reason why I've included it in this list of favourites is because I've never been so impressed by a company's first product. Anita Sinclair set herself a tremendous task when the first germs of ideas for this game appeared in her mind, yet she must have surpassed even her own expectations. Despite the fact that this game has several annoying bugs and a few logical inconsistencies, I predict Magnetic Scrolls will go from strength to strength in future and set new standards in adventure game quality.



ALTER EGO (Activision)

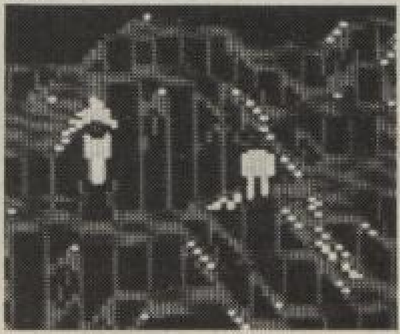
Psychiatry and psychoanalysis have never impressed me. Both sciences are in their infancy and are riddled with inconsistencies and arbitrary values. However, the insight into human experience that this game's author obviously possessed has convinced me that one day, miracles will be possible. We will make God in our own image. And he will be interactive.

THE HITCH-HIKERS GUIDE TO THE GALAXY (Infocom)

This game is the nearest any piece of software has got to a pint of Guiness. Fills you up, has unbeatable flavour and is, of course, pure genius. The funniest game ever penned. Need I really say more?

THE SENTINEL (Firebird)

Art for art's sake? Read the review in this issue. Ionised infatuation brimming over with imagination . . .



There you have it. Desert Island Discs will never be the same. Well, hardly surprising really. The DJ's dead.

Here we go again. This time, US Gold get all the attention — for all the wrong reasons . . .

A TRANSATLANTIC MOAN

Dear Sean,
I am extremely pleased to see the return of the strategic section ZZAP! 64 pages. However, I do have one major complaint!! From reading your ratings section on *Vietnam* (I quote: 'Excellent, If the contents remain the same when these are reprinted for the English market') I assume that you are reviewing American copies of SSI products.

Unfortunately you tell us how wonderful these SSI products are (and I would not disagree) and then us poor suckers go out and spend our hard earned cash on totally inferior Transatlantic Simulations rubbish.

If I can site *Germany, 1985* as one example, where the packaging is a 'fold out sheet' with miniature print and as for the map — what Map?! I wrote to TS and waited and waited and waited! Eventually I telephoned them (at great cost) and was told that maps were overlooked and were being printed and that one would be forwarded as soon as available.

So again I waited etc, I telephoned again and was told that they had not yet been printed and I would receive a photocopy. I queried how they were going to photocopy a coloured card and was told that the maps were in black and white. When I received my photocopy it was very poor copy quality, and was obviously, of a coloured card. So I telephoned (my poor telephone bill . . .) yet again. This time I was told that they only had one coloured card and were not planning on printing any, but they would send a better quality copy to me. That was six weeks ago and I am still waiting. A second example is *Phantasie*, which has only one side of a two sided program on the disk.

If you are going to review software please perform the test on British releases, because I, for one, will never buy another TS rubbish release, unless I have assurances that (i) it works and (ii) the packaging is sufficient. I would even be prepared to pay a little extra for a good game, but I am afraid that imports are a little too expensive for my pocket. I await, with great interest, your comments.
Terry Edwards, Sutton, Surrey

When I first covered the impending SSI releases, I was sent the American packages for review. At that time I was under the impression that there would be no significant alterations made. Evidently, cost cutting measures were employed, often to the detriment of the product. You're right about the map cards. They are in colour and to send a black and white copy is fairly hopeless but I think that calling the English versions rubbish is going a bit far. The copy of Vietnam I reviewed just had the disk and some photocopied instructions and was still a very good game. This situation should not arise again. Meanwhile, how does the idea of £20 worth of software cheer you up?
SM



IMPORT RECOMMENDATION

Dear Sean,
Thanks for starting a decent strategy section in a magazine I thought was getting a bit childish lately. I was thinking this was going to be the last time I bought it till I saw your section. Anyway now for a few remarks about what you said in the last mag. About buying import games from the states, I think it is worth it. I've had *Ultima IV* since last November and when are you going to see the classic games from SSI like *Operation Market Garden, Wizard's Crown* and the latest I've just acquired, *Road War 2000* which is sort of *Mad Max* based strategy.

Also the presentation of the games knocks spots off the US Gold versions you get over here. You say they are dear but look how long they last. If you like war strategy, these games will keep you amused for months and months. How long will *Johnny Reb II* last? Also, the latest SSI games out here are *Questron* and *Phantasie*. Good games I agree but *Phantasie II* has been available on import for a couple of months now. So use your influence and shake up US Gold to get the new role playing and strategy games out.
Barry Southey, Enfield, Middlesex

The American SSI games are fantastic, I agree. The trouble is, most people couldn't afford them, or at least not many of them. And as for using my influence, I'm sorry but I don't have any. Hopefully, they will take note of these letters and make changes for the future.
SM

SILENT PROBLEM

Dear Sir,
Could you offer any way around the problem I am having with my US GOLD *Silent Service* cassette game? On completing a mission and returning to a base, the game stops and will allow you to go no further, ie: Record Tonnage Sunk, Re-Load Torpedoes and set out on another mission. I would be very grateful to know if there is a way around this problem as *Silent Service* is otherwise a very good simulation.
R Gowans, Dundee

Several people have asked this question and the answer would appear to be that this is an error left unchanged in the cassette version of the game. Unfortunately, reloading and starting again is the only option I am aware of. If anybody does know a way around this, it would be interesting to hear.
SM

That's yer lot. Thanks to everyone who responded to last month's column. In future, send your queries, complaints et al to ZZAP! RRAP where Lloyd will deal with them in his own, inimitable style. Cheers and good luck with life in general.

AMTIX!

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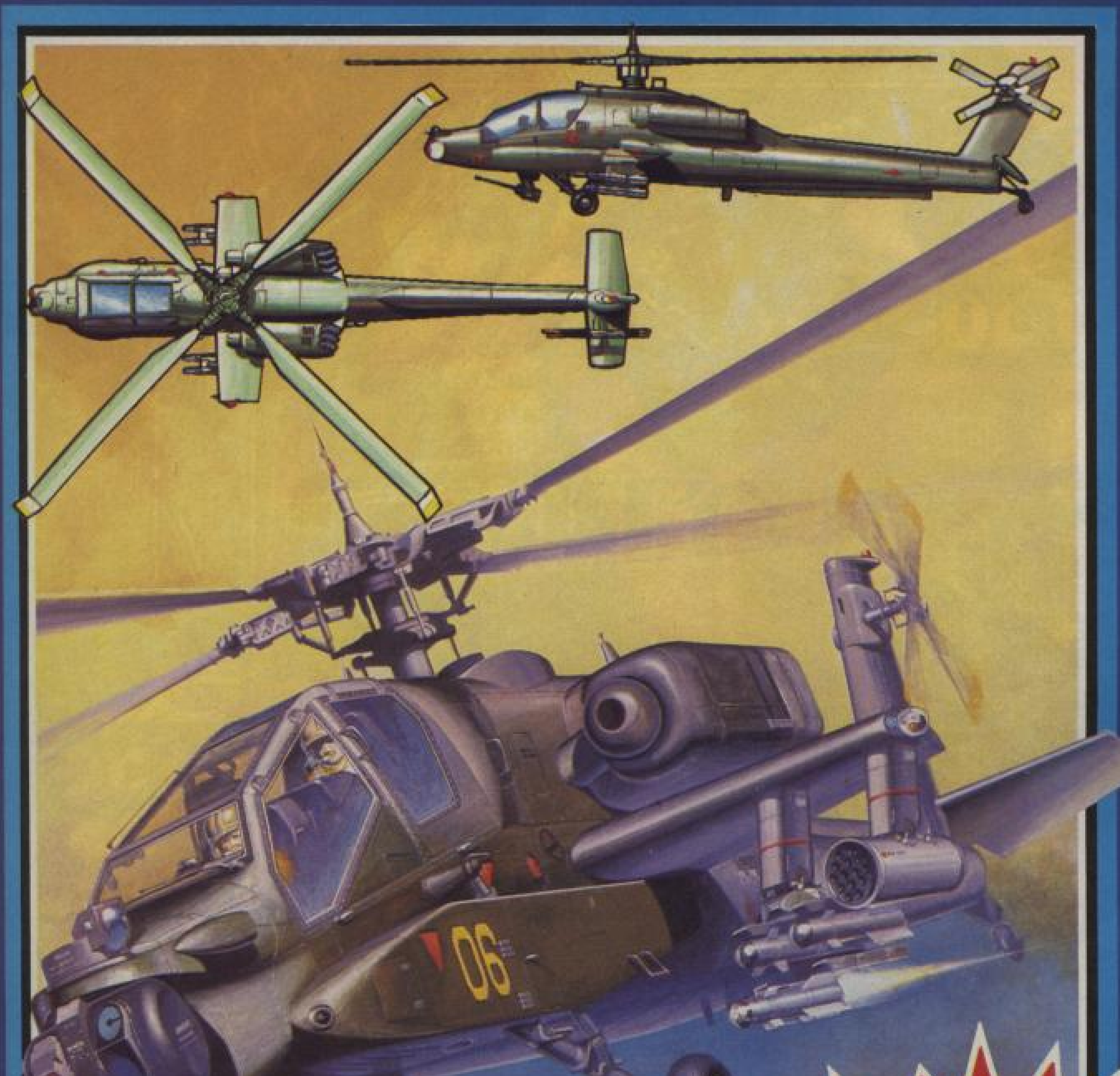
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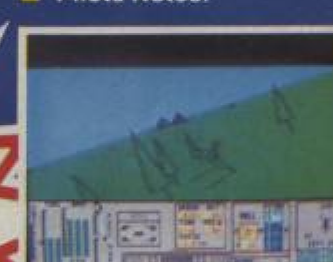
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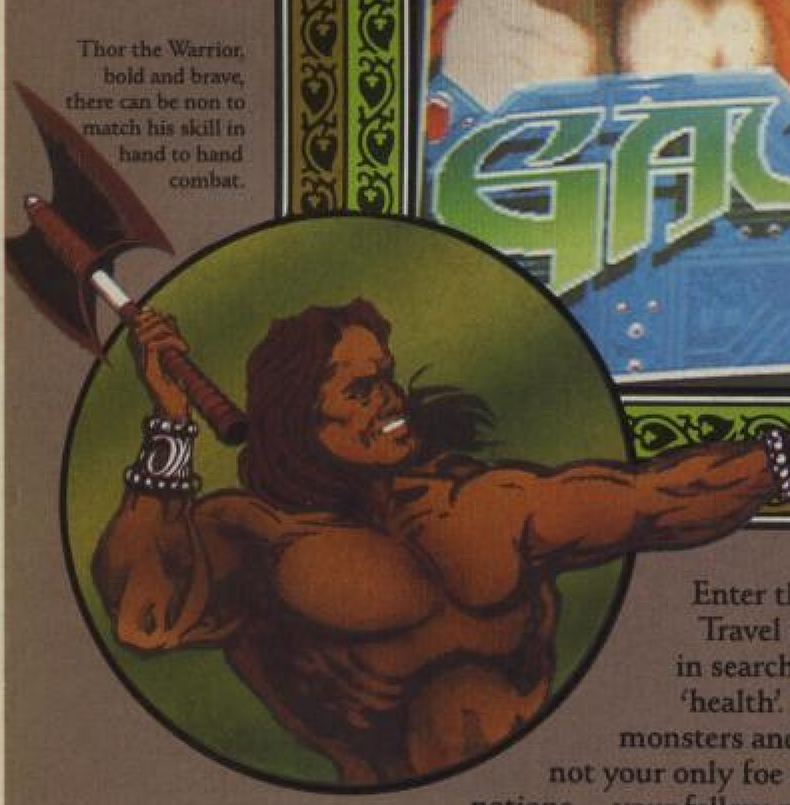


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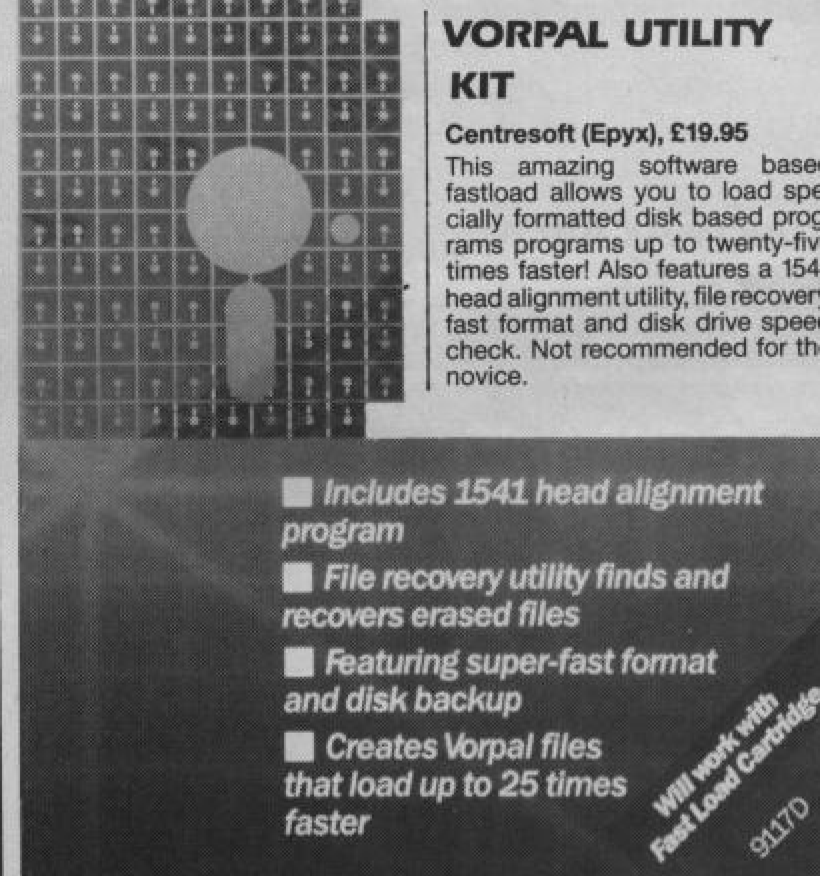
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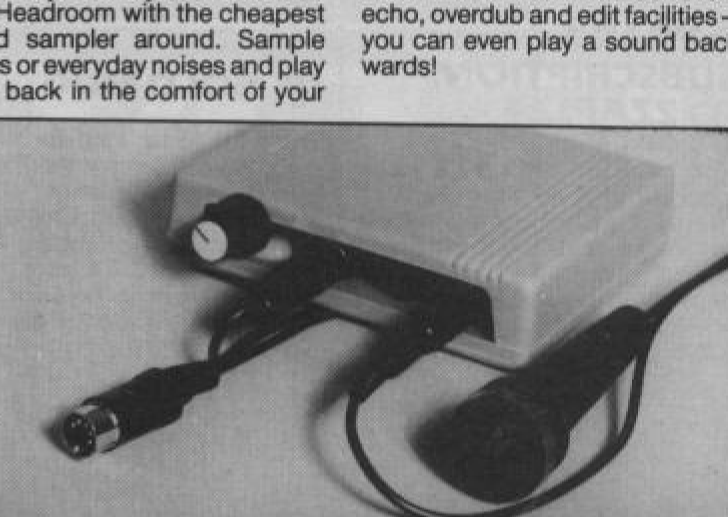
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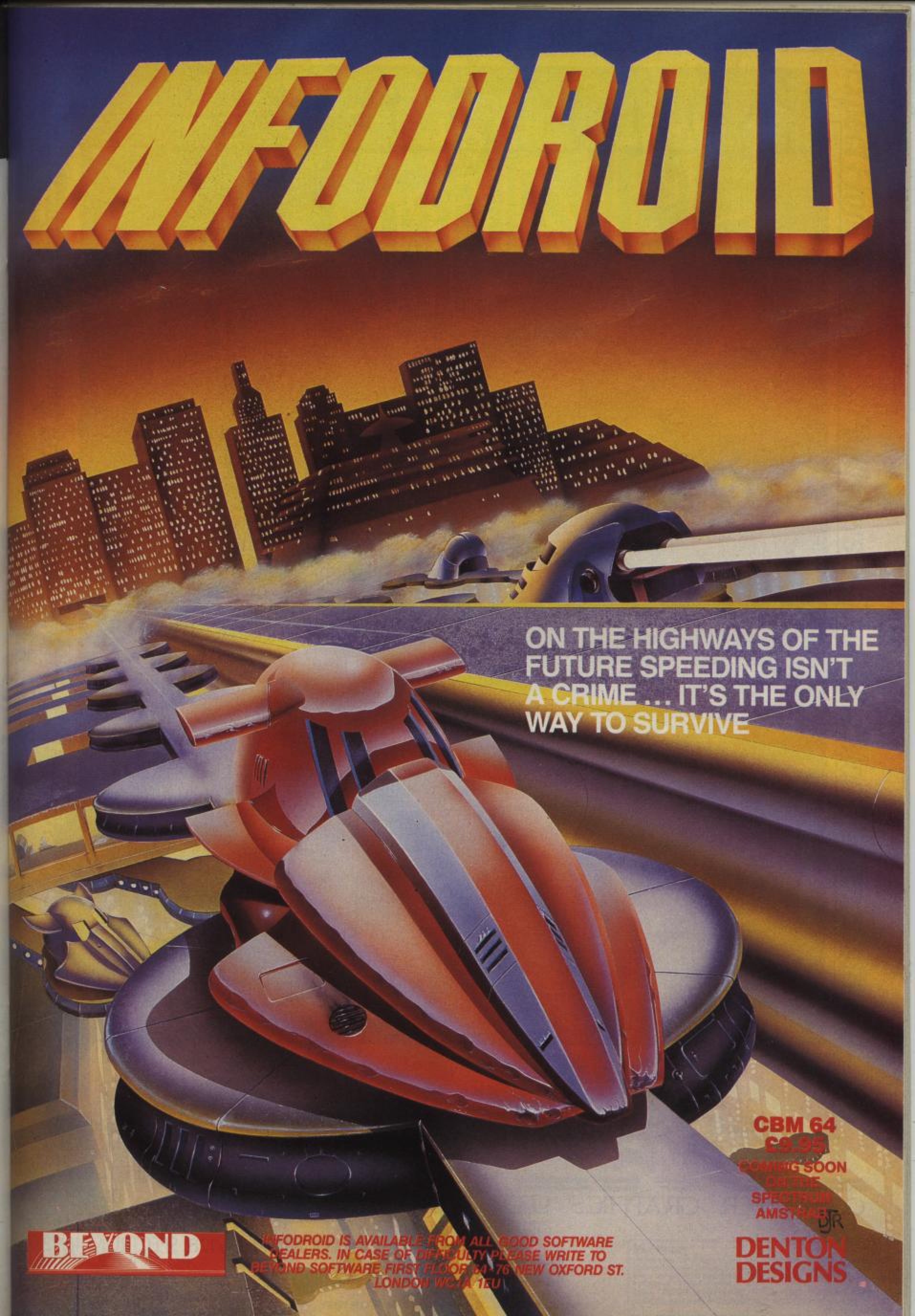


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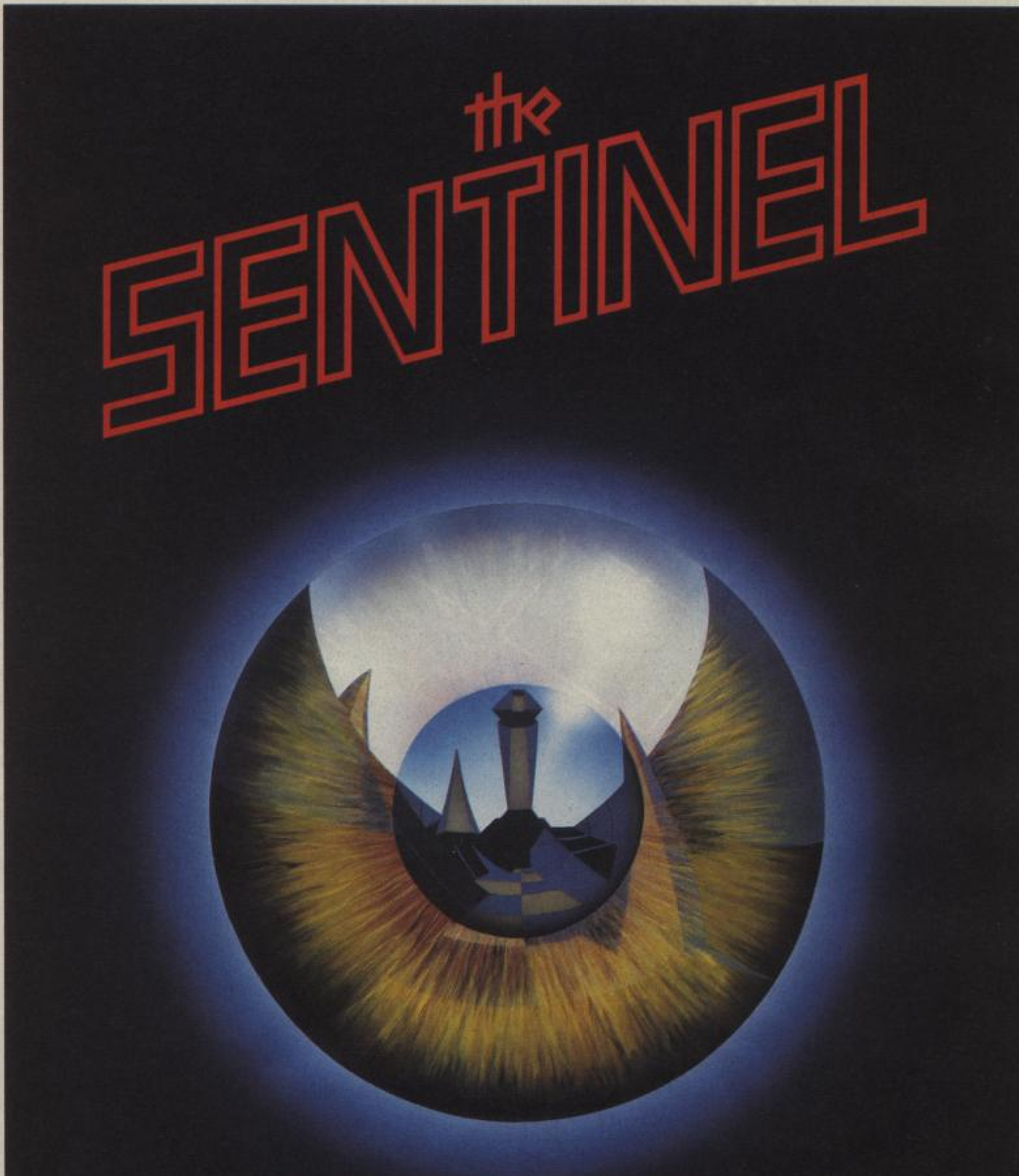


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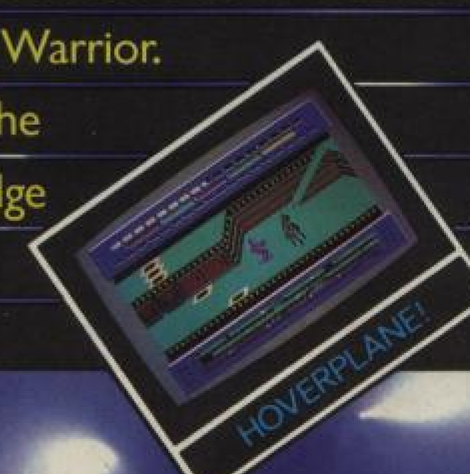
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PITSTOP II
US Gold (Epyx), £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk

A split screen race game which offers you the chance to race around one of six famous tracks against the computer or a friend. Cramp guaranteed with every race!

RACING DESTRUCTION SET
Ariolasoft, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk

Build your own tracks and cars and race them in this split screen one or two player game. Loads of useful options to provide plenty of scope for all manner of tracks and racers. Unfortunately, both cassette and disk versions feature an awful multiload system which virtually destroys a quality game.

SUPER CYCLE
US Gold (Epyx), £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk

Ride a 750cc motorbike around ten different tracks and take on the world's best racers to win the motorcycle Grand Prix. Both man-made and natural hazards are present to ruin a rider's chances of success. Fast 3D graphics and suitably racy sounds make **Super Cycle** highly exhilarating to play.

TRAILBLAZER
Gremlin Graphics, £9.95 cass

One of the simplest, most addictive race games available. High speed split screen action at its most frenetic. For more details, see the review on page 172.

SHOOT EM UPS

ANCIPITAL
Llamasoft

Controlling an endearing little half man/half goat ancipital character you must blast your way through 100 screens of weird and wonderful arcade action. Four way gravity and a frenetic pace make this one of the best blasting games available.

DROPZONE
Americana (Arena Graphics), £2.99 cass

Spawned from William's **Stargate**, this classic horizontal scrolling shoot em up has you defending scientists from eight breeds of marauding aliens. High speed shoot em up action and outstanding value for money.

ENCOUNTER
Novagen, £8.95 cass

Paul Woakes' incredibly fast 3D shoot em up is set over a strange landscape where you strive to survive by destroying several types of flying saucers and missiles before they destroy you. A classic variation on the **Battlezone** theme.

GUARDIAN
Alligata

Steve Evans' definitive version of the timeless arcade classic **Defender**. All the thrills and spills of the original and as close to the real thing as you're ever going to get. Only available on the **Fistful of Fun** compilation tape.

IRIDIS ALPHA
Hewson (Llamasoft), £8.95 cass

An incredibly fast bi-directional scrolling shoot em in true Minter style. Controlling a Gilby ship you must shoot wave after wave of marauding aliens and deposit energy into your planet's core. Fast, frenetic, weird — wonderful. There's even two pause modes!

PARADROID
Hewson, £8.95

Andrew Braybrook's classic shoot em up has you entering eight renegade ships in an attempt to terminate all the androids on board. Features a large scrolling play area and fast paced action, plus plenty of other exciting and unusual features which make this a timeless classic.

PASTFINDER
Activision, £9.95 cass

Guide your bouncing 'Leeper' craft over hundreds of vertically scrolling screens and retrieve the artifacts scattered across the terrain. Many futuristic landscapes to negotiate and aliens to destroy.

SANXION
Thalamus, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk

Written by a strange Finnish lad with an unpronouncable name, this shoot em up has you battling against umpteen evil aliens over fourty increasingly difficult scrolling levels. Arcade quality graphics and sound are part and parcel of this superb blasting game.

SENTINEL
Americana £2.99 cass

The best **Star Raiders** type game available for the Commodore. Wonderful 3D effects, gameplay and atmosphere as you try to defend your home planet from the attacking aliens.



STOCKING FILLERS

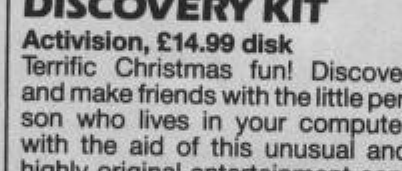
ALTERNATIVE SOFTWARE

ALTER EGO
Activision, £24.99 disk only
Written by a psychologist, **Alter Ego** offers you the chance to relive your life again and again. Cope with a lifetime's worth of problems — adolescence, old age, sex and much, much more — in what must be the most innovative piece of software ever created. Fun for all the family — if you've got a disk drive.

LITTLE COMPUTER PEOPLE DISCOVERY KIT
Activision, £14.99 disk
Terrific Christmas fun! Discover and make friends with the little person who lives in your computer with the aid of this unusual and highly original entertainment concept. Avoid the cassette version like the plague.

ARCADE GAMES

BOULDERDASH
Databyte (First Star), £9.95 cass
ZZAP!'s ever effervescent margin mega-star has certainly appeared in his fair share of games. In all the games you have to collect a number of diamonds from sixteen scrolling caves within an allotted time limit. That's the basics, but there are plenty of things to stop you completing your task, such as fireflies, butterflies and amoeba. See page 176 for a full review of the definitive **Boulderdash** game.



THE EIDOLON
Activision (Lucasfilm), £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk
Enter and explore the corridors of your mind in this incredible 3D arcade game. Travel through seven labyrinthine levels, destroying or avoiding strange creatures and large dragons. Then confront the ultimate evil — a huge seven headed beast hidden deep within the recesses of your mind.

GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS
Elite, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
In this accurate arcade conversion you play the part of a knight on his quest to rescue a fair maiden from the clutches of an evil demon lord. Features five scrolling levels and many horrible creatures to hinder your progress.

GREEN BERET
Imagine, £8.95 cass
An excellent arcade conversion in which you play a well-hard member of the Green Hat brigade. Travel through many scrolling screens and penetrate enemy lines, single handedly destroying the enemy army to free your buddies from a POW camp.

GRIBBLY'S DAY OUT
Hewson, £7.95 cass
Set in a strange, scrolling world called Blabgor, you take control of Gribbly Grobbly, a cute one-legged character whose task is to rescue several baby Griblets from sixteen scrolling levels of increasing difficulty. Andrew Braybrook at his best.

INTERNATIONAL KARATE
System 3, £6.50 cass, £10.99 disk
A classic beat em up which allows one or two players to kick, punch and chop their way through varying degrees of opponents to become a black belt champion. Two bonus sequences and amazing graphics complimented by a fabulous Rob Hubbard soundtrack.

JACK ATTACK
Commodore, £14.95 ROM
This game is certainly lacking in the graphics and sound department, but makes up for the deficiency with its huge addictive qualities. Controlling fat Jack you must squash the marauding heads as they bounce around the screen. Weird and rather expensive, but great fun.

SLAMBALL
Americana, £2.99 cass
A pinball machine inside a monster's stomach is the setting for this zany game. High speed scrolling pinball action with you controlling the ball!

SPINDIZZY
Electric Dreams, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk
In this 3D flick screen exploration game inspired by **Marble Madness** you take control of GERALD, a YOP cartographer, and have to explore over 350 different screens in an attempt to complete a map. Lots to see and plenty of devious puzzles to solve.

THRUST
Firebird, £1.99 cass
Visit numerous hostile planets in your highly manoeuvrable spaceship and attempt to pick up supply pods, avoiding enemy installations in the process. Reverse gravity and invisible landscapes make the going tough on later levels. Exceptional value for money.

TRIVIAL THINGS

POWERPLAY
Arcana, £9.95 cass
A Trivia orientated arcade game played on a large chequered board with unusual pieces. Correctly answer dozens of questions, mutate and defeat the opposition in unique head to head challenges. Four difficulty levels and if you get bored of the questions you can always create your own!

TRIVIAL PURSUIT
Domark, £14.95 cass, £17.95 disk
The officially licenced conversion of the immensely popular board game uses exactly the same rules of the original to produce a thoroughly enjoyable program. There are plenty of novel features and loads of questions to keep all Trivia fans happy for months.

PLATFORM GAMES

BOUNDER
Gremlin Graphics, £9.95 cass
This highly original platform game puts you in control of a tennis ball which must be negotiated through ten tough courses. Great graphics and addictive gameplay.

BOUNTY BOB STRIKES BACK
Americana (Big Five), £2.99 cass
Packed full of unusual features, this sequel to **Miner 2049'er** puts you in the role of Bounty Bob who must collect artifacts from twenty five devious screens. Compulsive platform action at a low price.

HERCULES
Alpha Omega, £1.99 cass
Offering fifty screens of amazingly addictive, but horribly sadistic platform action, this game breaks new grounds in the frustration generation. Weak on graphics and sound, but many strong gameplay elements for only two quid.

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION
Epyx/US Gold, £9.95 cass
In this platform game cum arcade adventure you must make your way through the Evil Professor Atombender's lair and recover and assemble the 36 different pieces of password. Lots of speech, brilliant graphics and plenty of original features make this a true classic.

LODE RUNNER
Ariolasoft, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
Frantic platform action as you try to collect gold chests from 150 different screens. Poor graphics and sound, but a brilliant game. Comes complete with a comprehensive screen designer!

ARCADE ADVENTURES

ARAC
Addictive Games, £9.95 cass
Capture strange creatures and use their characteristics to the full to help ARAC the droid become a spider. Superb graphics and original gameplay elements make this a must for all arcade adventurers.

CAULDRON
Palace Software, £7.99 cass
Over a year old but still one of the best games of its type available. Play the part of a nice old hag who must destroy an evil Pumpking and his horrible minions who have taken control of the forest and caverns below. A brilliant blend of scrolling shoot em up action and

platform problems. Can you assemble the six ingredients of the pumpkin destruction potion?

CAULDRON II

Palace Software, £8.95 cass

Taking the role of a cute little pumpkin you have to destroy an evil witch by assembling a magic potion, a task which requires you to battle with her minions and explore her giant castle. Six strange objects to collect and many weird adversaries to overcome.

DAN DARE

Virgin, £8.95 cass

Take control of Dan Dare himself in this graphically stunning flick-screen binary comic strip. Avoid or fight the Treen guards and solve many original and humorous puzzles in an attempt to penetrate and destroy the evil Mekon's asteroid before it crashes into the Earth.

MERCENARY/ SECOND CITY

Novagen, £9.95 and £4.95 respectively (cass)

This stunning 3D vector arcade adventure and its dedicated sequel open up a complete new world in your 64. Fly around the two huge cities and explore massive underground complexes as you try to escape from the planet.

SCARABAEUS

Ariolasoft, £9.95 cass

An incredibly atmospheric, 3D real-time arcade adventure in which you must travel through the Pharaoh's tomb to find the Scarabaeus emerald. Features ghosts, poisonous spiders, zombies, and plenty of unusual problems to solve.

ARCADE PUZZLES

SPLIT PERSONALITIES

Domark, £8.95 cass

An arcade style slide puzzle with a difference! Plenty of devious twists to hinder your attempts at assembling ten split images of famous people.

ZENJI

Activision, £9.99 cass

In this magnificent arcade puzzle you must turn and link 'elements' to The Source before the time limit expires. Just to add a little hassle and excitement there are several nasty creatures out to stop you.



NOISY THINGS

ELECTROSOUND

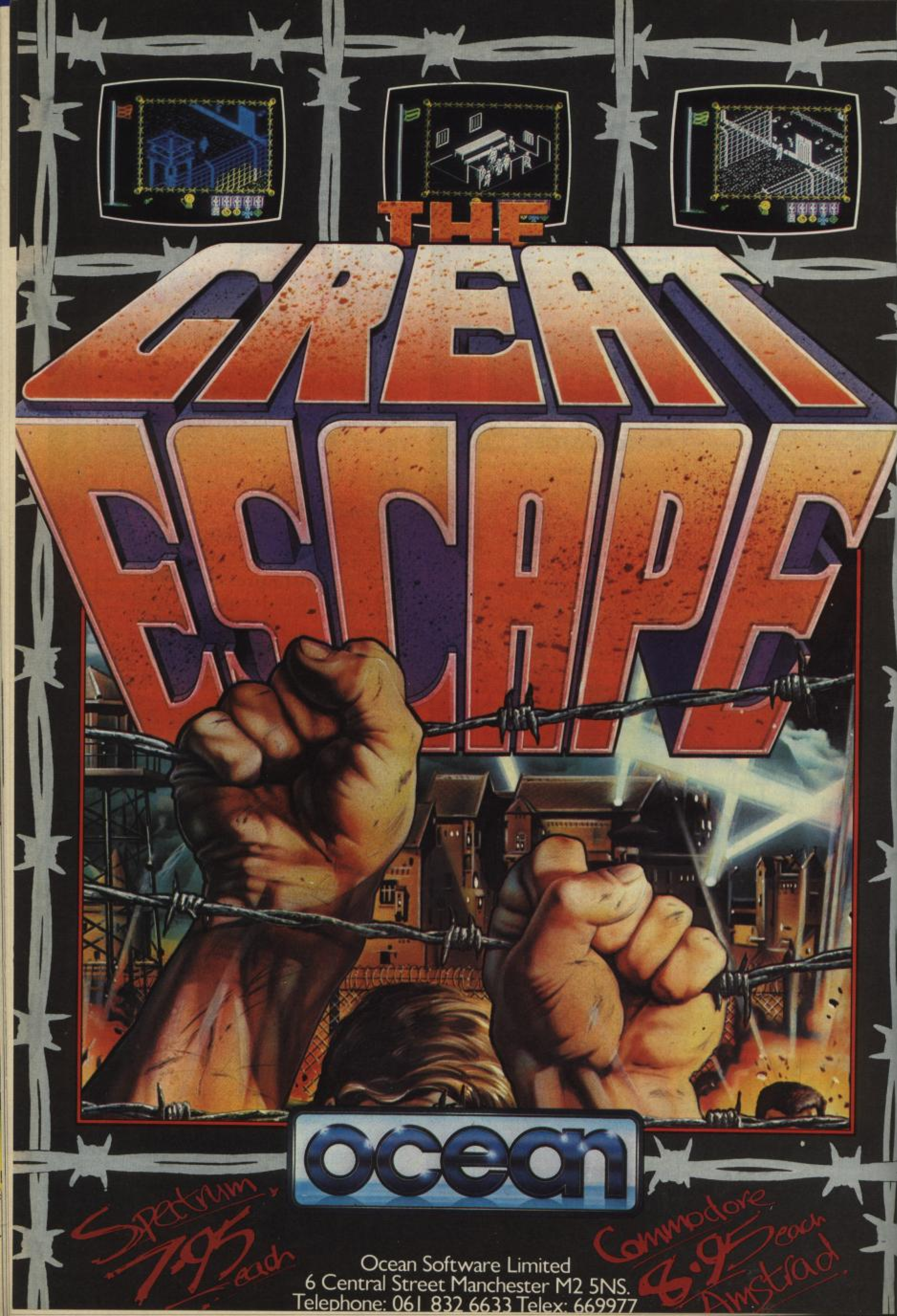
Orpheus, £14.95 cass, £17.95 disk

This outstanding music utility allows any budding musician to create quality tunes and use them in games or demos. May prove a little overwhelming at first, but the potential is there for creating professional soundtracks and effects.

MICRORHYTHM

Firebird, £1.99 cass

The cheapest and most impressive digital drum kit for the 64. For more details, see the review on page 124 . . .



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Two worlds – the mirror image of each other, touch in space through a Time-Warp.

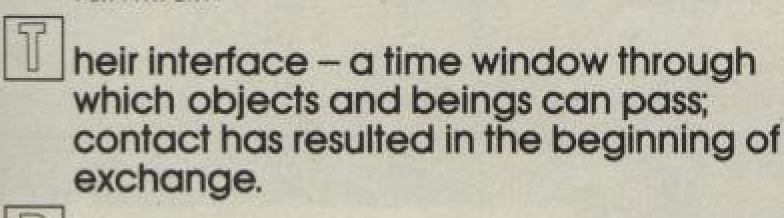
One is positive, good, familiar – our World; the other is negative, evil yet unnervingly familiar.

Their interface – a time window through which objects and beings can pass; contact has resulted in the beginning of exchange.

Restore our World – stop the invasion, but do it <u>now</u>, for as the exchange accelerates, the time window grows larger – domination is a hand!

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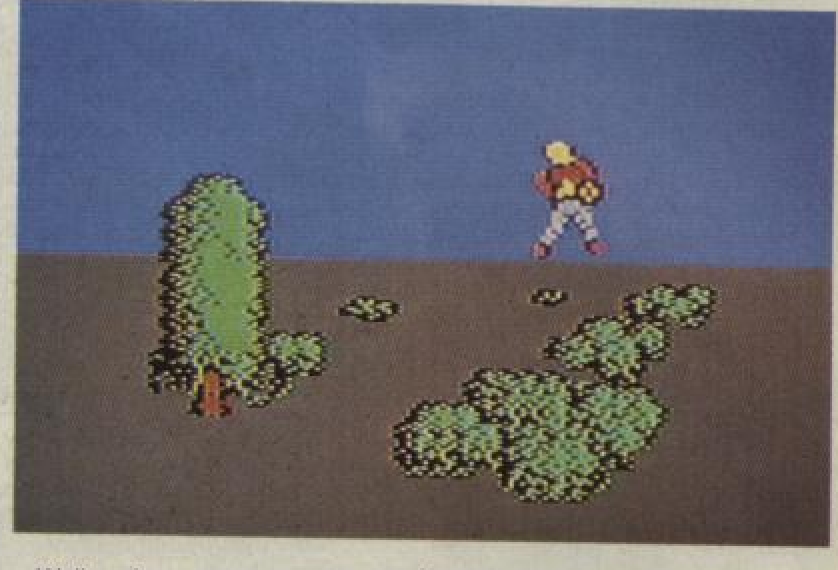
SPACED OUT BY SPACE HARRIER

Anyone who regularly frequents an arcade will have seen, or at least heard of Sega's graphically and aurally amazing **Space Harrier**. If you walk into an arcade housing a **Space Harrier** machine, you won't miss it: it's a huge affair, consisting of a seat and video screen mounted on a huge hydraulic arm which moves as you play.

In the game you take control of a soldier who must make his way through sixteen levels of first person perspective action, blasting or dodging anything that moves, including landscape features like trees and rocks. Each level has its own distinctive landscape and aliens (on later levels the going gets really tough with the landscape packed with indestructible objects), and at the end of each level there is a creature, or set of creatures which must be destroyed (a dragon on level one, spinning heads on level two, and so on).

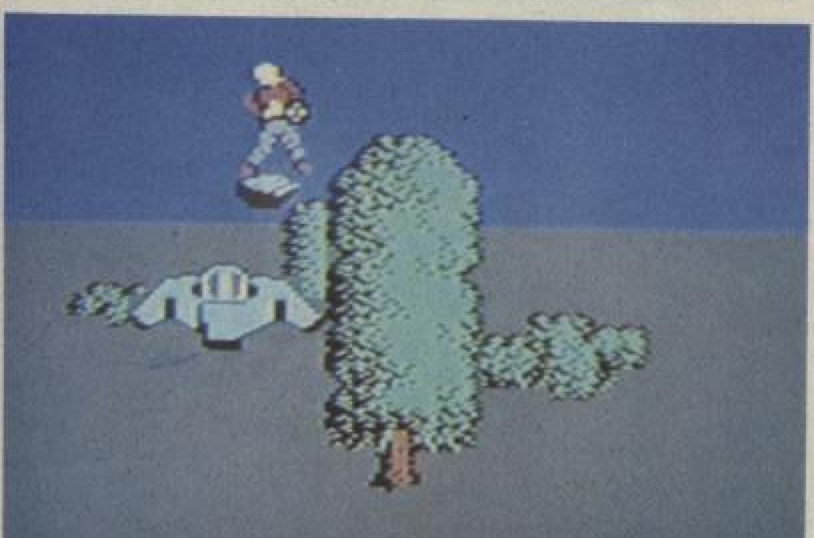
Space Harrier is more of an experience than a game — the amazing graphics and sound and hydraulic movement compensating for weak gameplay elements. It's little more than a simple shoot em up, but even so, the 64 conversion looks like it will be something special . . .

When Elite first announced that they were to release a conversion of **Space Harrier**, everyone laughed very loudly and felt that whoever took on the monumental task of converting the game must be a few bits short of a full byte. Hardly surprising, since no-one in their right mind would attempt to reproduce such a visually stunning arcade game on the humble 64 . . . would they?



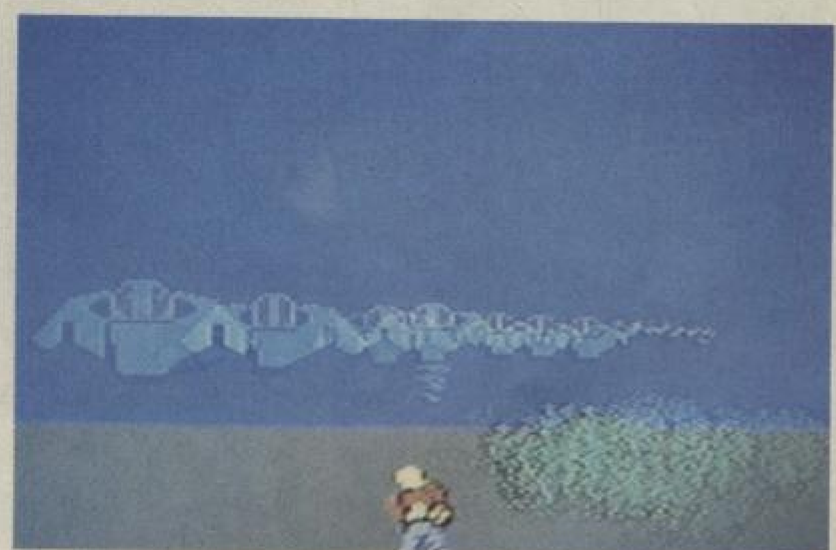
Well, after many weeks of 'quietly confident' and intensive programming, Chris Butler has almost done it. With the exception of the sound and hydraulics, **Space Harrier** on the 64 is just about all there — and it's looking good.





"JOYSTICKS OUT, AND WAIT FOR IT...

detail. And as you can see from these screen shots, Space Harrier on the 64 features detailed objects. What you can't appreciate, however, is the speed at which the objects move. Maybe this shot will give you some idea . . .



We saw just how much Chris has done to date, which is basically the core of the game — the 3D routines and some alien movement patterns. Oh — and a rather crude main sprite which is subject to change.

All the objects move out of the screen surprisingly fast and smooth, and it's certainly fair to say that graphics of this type have never been seen on the 64 before. **Tau Ceti** and **Encounter** feature fast moving scenery and objects (especially **Encounter**), but in both games the objects are simple geometric shapes with little or no detail.

Chris is confident the game won't slow down as more features are added, such as sound and more objects and aliens. He's only worried about time. At the time of writing Chris has five weeks to finish the game. The graphics are taking up most of his time (and memory!), so Elite are doing most of the graphics in-house to prevent any potential delay.

Although Chris is content with what he's produced, he feels that he could certainly get things running smoother (!). But then, why bother when what he's done looks as good as it does . . .

FLASH GORDON!





Once again the general well being of the Earth is under threat from Ming the Merciless. And once again it's up to **Flash Gordon** to save the world . . . only this time the fate of the Earth is also in your hands, thanks to Mastertronic who will soon be unleashing an officially licenced game based on the exploits of this cult character.

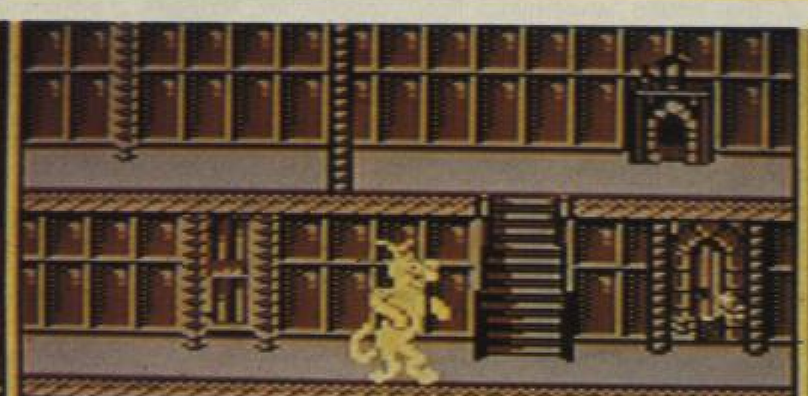
The program comes in three stages, each is a playable game in its own right and is loaded in from cassette. The first load contains a bulk of all three games, so subsequent loads don't prove too time consuming.

The first game is a flip screen arcade adventure in which you take control of Flash just after his ship has crash landed in the jungle. Armed only with his trusty gun and a limited supply of ammunition, Flash must make his way through the maze-like jungle to a cave where Prince Barin is waiting. Hazards come in the form of mutated creatures, which must be either shot or avoided, and the occasional crevasse which must be jumped.

On entering the cave the second game is loaded. This takes the form of a single player beat em up in which Flash must earn Prince Barin's respect by beating him in unarmed combat. If Flash beats Prince Barin, he is given a lightcycle which must be used to catch up with and destroy Ming, who has just made good his escape. This is the third and final game — a 3D first person perspective shoot em up which takes place on a *Ballblazer* type grid.

Flash Gordon is virtually complete and should be released by Mastertronic before the end of November, at a price of £2.99 on cassette. Hopefully, there will be a full review next month . . .

COMING SOON TO A SCREEN NEAR YOU!



SCOOBY SCOOBY DOO!

Where are you? Here . . . well, almost. **Scooby Doo** has been over a year in the making and has gone through many changes. It was intended to be the home computer equivalent of a laser disk game, but proved impossible within the limitations of the 64. So, Elite contracted Gargoyle Games to write an arcade game for them. And they did so, on the Spectrum and Amstrad. The 64 conversion isn't being programmed by Gargoyle, but from what we've seen it looks very close to the other versions.

Scooby Doo is a scrolling arcade game set in a mad professor's castle. You control Scooby and your task is to rescue his four companions, Daphne, Wilma, Fred, and Shaggy, from the clutches of the mad professor who has chopped them up and put them into specimen jars for future experiments. Ugh.

As to be expected in a Scooby Doo adventure, the castle is haunted. Phantoms, ghostly monks, skulls, ghoulfish (!) and bats, amongst other things, are all hell bent on stopping Scooby from freeing his chums.

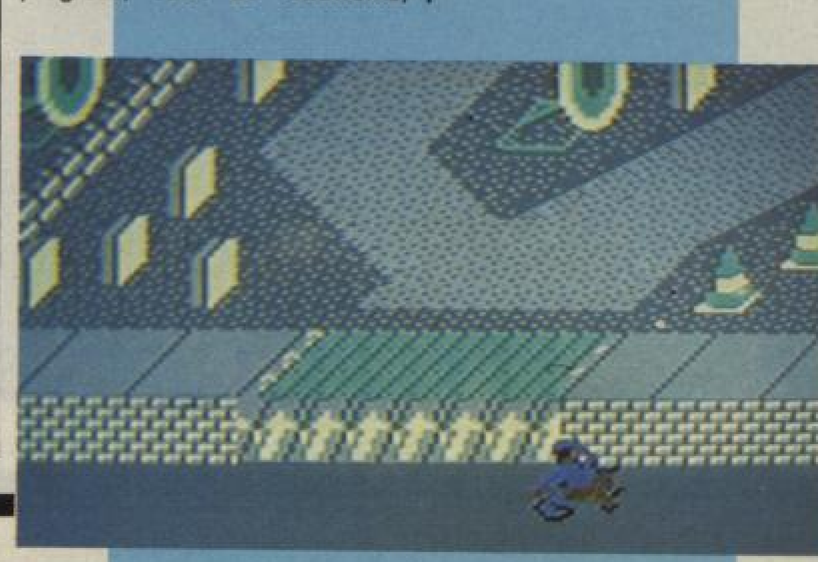
The game should be finished in time for Christmas. In the meantime, to give you an idea of what the game should look like, here is a screen shot taken from the 64 version as it stands . . .

PAPERBOY
A LATE DELIVERY

This arcade conversion has been in the pipeline for some time now and has been delayed yet again due to programming difficulties. So, despite numerous promises, you won't be seeing any reviews for at least a month or two.

Paperboy puts you in control of an all American bicycle mounted schoolkid on his paper-round, with the objective of delivering newspapers to customers, and potential customers, for one week. There are plenty of everyday occurances to hinder Paperboy's progress, such as roadworks, dogs, skateboarders, joggers, and even the occasional motorbike. At the end of each day, bonus points can be scored by completing a BMX track.

The 64 conversion is being programmed by Neil A Bate and Chris Harvey, who were also responsible for **Airwolf** and **Frank Bruno's Boxing** on the 64. These screen shots were taken from the latest version of the conversion, but some of the graphics and gameplay elements will be tidied up before it is released late November.



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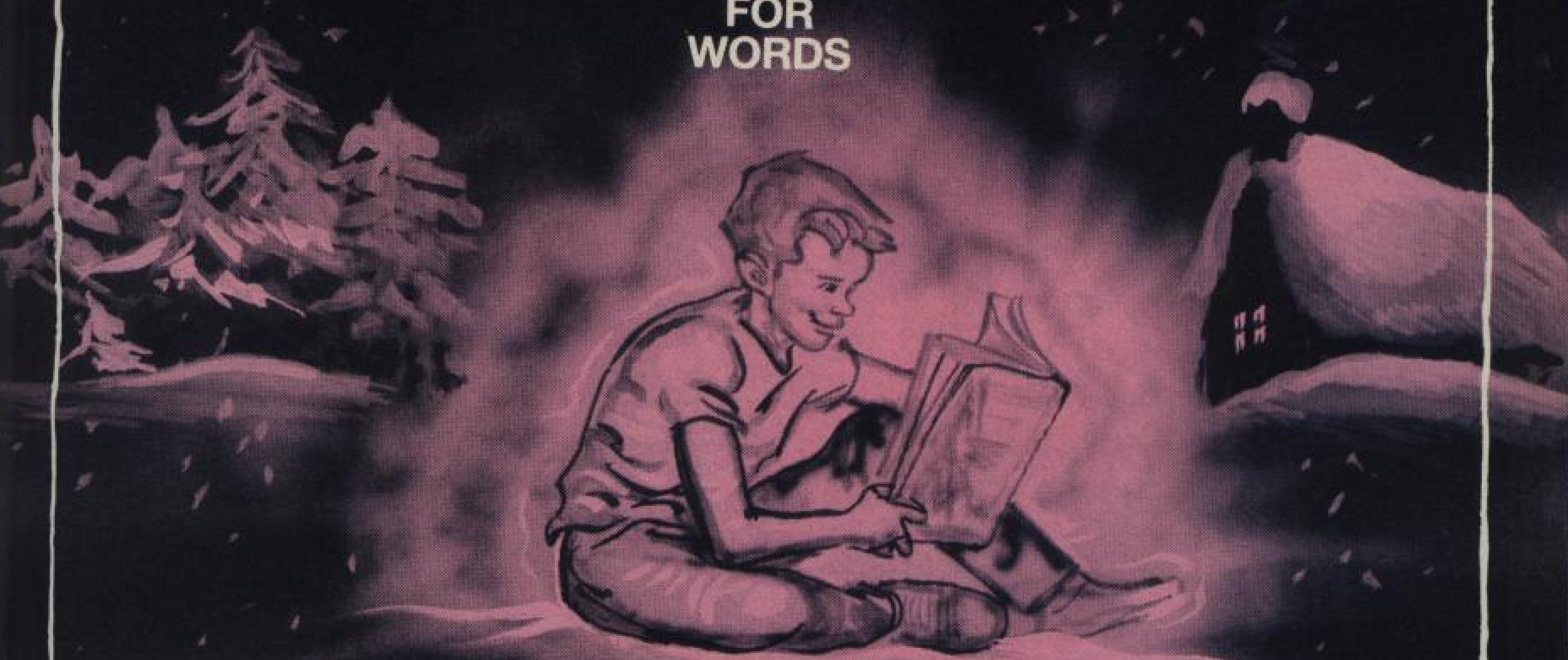
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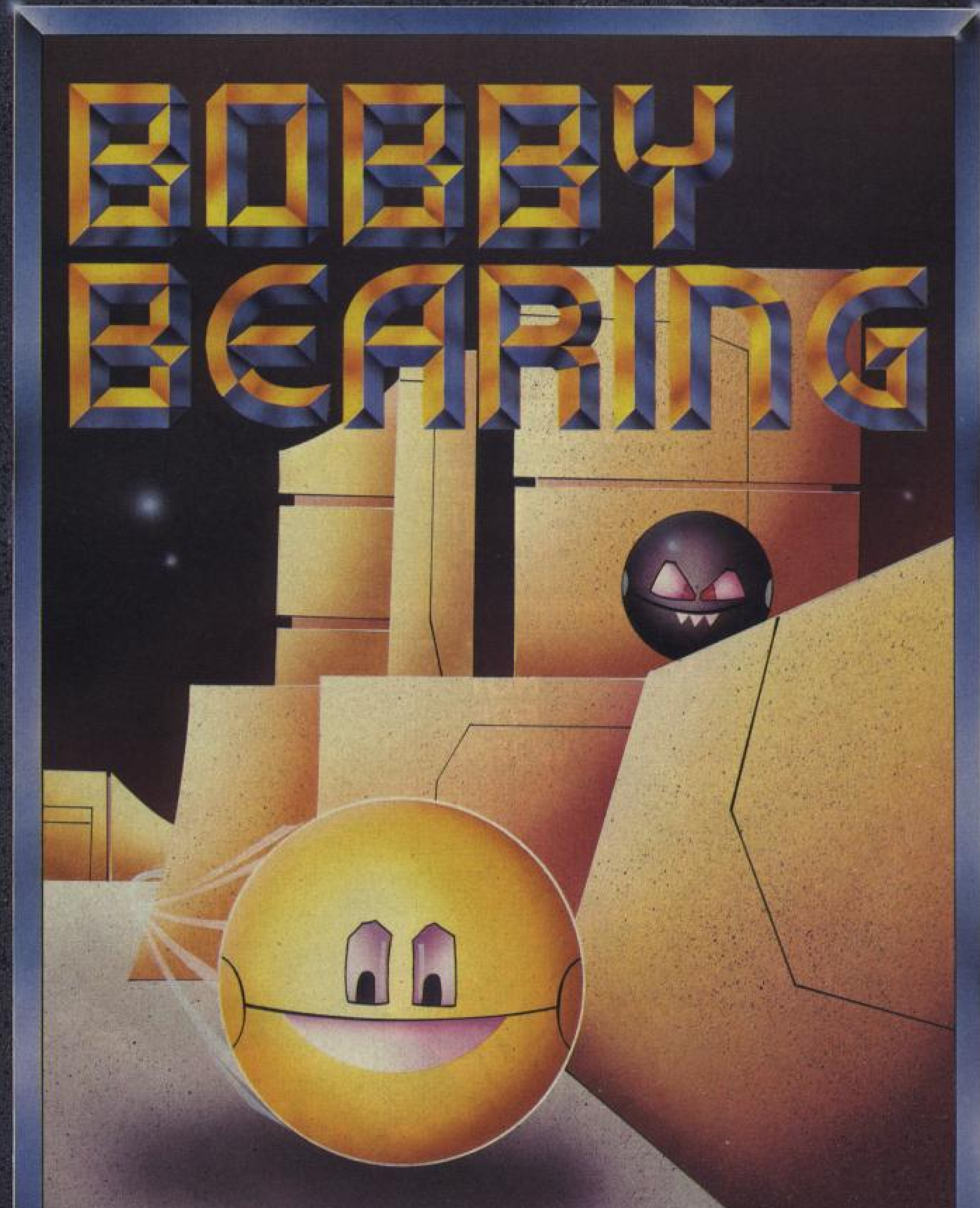
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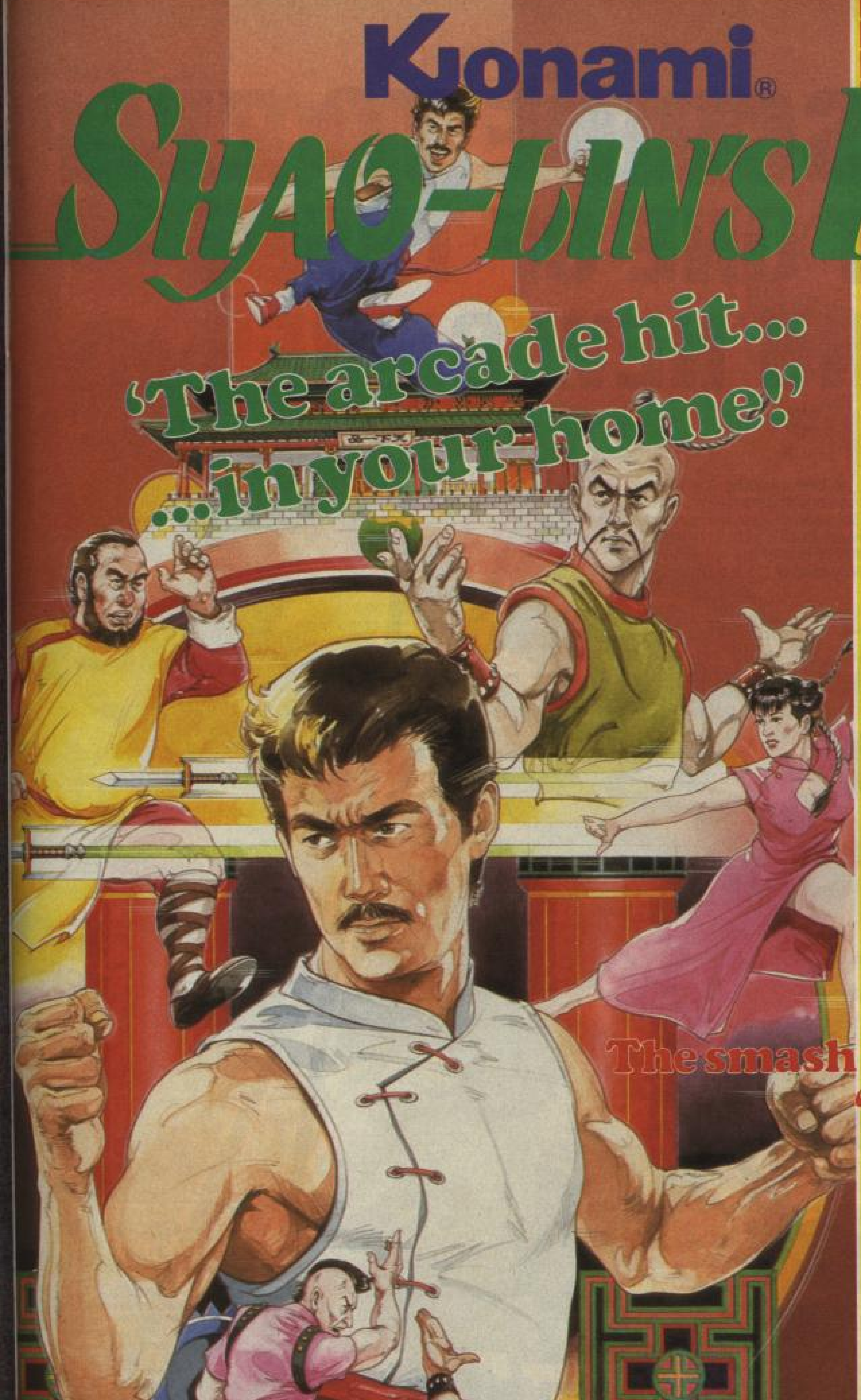
GAME OF THE MONTH C+VG

MEGAGAME

"I love this game . . . if you don't buy this, throw away your Spectrum!" C&VG Game of the Month August 1986.

"Bobby Bearing is very nearly perfect. This may sound a bit over the top but this game deserves a whole string of superlatives." ZX Computing August 1986.

Spectrum/Commodore 64/Amstrad





Screen shots from arcade version – home micro versions may differ.

The smash hit follow up to 'Yie Ar Kung-Fu'

Spectrum
Commodore 64
and
Amstrad versions
coming soon.

Our hero has finally mastered the secret martial art "CHIN'S SHAO-LIN" but is trapped by triad gangs. With kicks and other secret powers, escape from and travel SHAO-LIN'S road to freedom!

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Packed out with reviews of the latest games, consistently scooping the competition for news and previews of games of the future, interviews with famous and up-and-coming programmers, playing tips from the man with a degree in tactics on DEFENDER — none other than Julian Rignall, troglodytic terpsichore from the Whiter than blue-white Wizard, a definitive highscore table run by a systematic scaremongering Scorelord, and the unsympathetic scribblings of the world's most talented letter answerer, Lloyd Mangram. And don't forget the multitude of cool competitions — how many other magazines offer you the chance to win a real GAUNTLET arcade machine? Or a go-cart. Or a racing bike. Or a holiday in Paris . . . We've even offered you the chance to appear on the cover of our Christmas Special! And then there's the competition where you can win copies of the very latest games . . .

How did you ever get by without it? All in all it makes rather good sense to subscribe, what with our speedy new delivery service which means you'll probably get to see the finished magazine before we do!

GROUP ONE

SUPER HUEY II
This was to be reviewed in this issue, but we ran out of colour pages. It's an extension of its Sizzling predecessor (see the review in issue one) with lots of new missions. We've been playing it and already think it's destined to become a classic.

WORLD GAMES
The ZZAP! crew ran out of superlatives when it came to reviewing this classic Gold Medal sports simulation. It's got eight events from all around the world, including barrel jumping, log rolling, caber tossing and slalom skiing — and more!

XEVIOUS
This was the first ever vertically scrolling shoot em up and one of the first arcade games to gather a true cult following. Cruising over the landscape you must dispose of the Xevious forces and eventually confront the giant Andor Genesis Mother Ship.

GROUP TWO

GAUNTLET
What more can we say? THE official conversion of THE top-grossing arcade game of all-time. This excellent conversion allows one or two players to play either Elf, Wizard, Valkyrie or Thor and battle through meanie infested dungeons in search of treasure.

CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING
Grapple with eight different wrestlers on your way to winning the Championship Wrestling Belt. Incredible graphics and presentation make this the greatest Commodore wrestling game of all time.

CRYSTAL CASTLES
One of JR's all-time favourite arcade games, faithfully converted to your all-time favourite computer. Guide Bentley Bear through the amazing 3D crystal castles of Berthilda the witch as he searches for jewels.

FOR ONE YEAR . . .





GROUP THREE

MOVIE MONSTER
BASH, SMASH and STOMP your way through six famous cities. ROAR as you squish lots of pathetic little soldiers into the ground. SCREAM as you turn tanks into tin foil and YELL as you topple tall skyscapers. HEAPS of monstrous fun in this new Epyx game.

ACE OF ACES
Slip into the cockpit of a De Havilland Mosquito and attempt five different missions in this stunning action simulator. Fabulous graphics and sound generate an incredible atmosphere as you recreate World War II in the comfort of your own living room.

BREAKTHRU
Sitting in the world's most sophisticated armoured vehicle you must penetrate deep behind enemy lines and recover a stolen fighter. Tons of scrolling shoot em up action as you take on a complete army single handed.

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software getting harder . . . .

Julian Rignall



ZZAP! TIPS

Yes, that's a new mug leering down from the top of the page! Don't worry — Gary might have left the tips pages but there'll be no change in the way they're presented, or a decline in their quality (unless you stop sending them in). I did used to do Amtips, y'know, but I'll put that down to experience. No more crummy CALL &7530 and Anthony Clarke (the resident AMTIX technospurt) looming over my shoulder babbling 'hardware scroll' like a retarded parrot. This is the real thing!

Anyway, in this month's cold and wintry issue there are maps of Dan Dare **(thank you Gary),** Zoids **and** Jack the Nipper **along with complete solutions, POKEs, mini tipettes, et al. Not bad for a first go, I suppose. Oh — I nearly forgot . . . in the centre pages there's a beautiful map of** The Sacred Armour of Antiriad **(thanks again, Gazza ol' mate). As a Syrius Cybernetics Corporation Door would say: 'glad to be of service'.**

Oh, by the way: those of you who own a C128 can use the reset switch at the side of the machine to enter POKEs (it's next to the ON/OFF switch). Just LOAD the game as normal, press reset and enter the POKEs (although don't forget to keep the COMMODORE key pressed as you reset, otherwise the machine will revert back to 128 mode and you won't be able to enter the POKEs).

'WHERE'S GARY...?!!'

BACK TO THE FUTURE (Electric Dreams)

If you never managed to complete this rather tacky game-of-the-film, follow these free 'n' easy tips and you'll be able to do it without any hassle. Ta very much to Ian Durston **who lives in sunny Bridgewater in Somerset. By the way, don't forget to blow the dust off the cassette before you put it into the C2N, 'cos it can ruin the tape heads.**

Righty-ho and off you go . . . Grab the skateboard from the crates and skate away to the doctor's room. When you arrive, collect the space suit and try to find George. Once you've turned George's icon green, go to the hall and get the guitar and make George stand still. Your mother should walk in (in the game, that is), so get the guitar again and freeze her next to him. Now, The Power of Love theme music will play and your picture should start to reappear.

Biff shouldn't be able to pass your Ma when she's standing still, so there's no need to worry about him. After a while they'll go back to normal, so collect the guitar and get both of them to stand still again. Keep doing this until your picture is fully restored, then go to the doctor's house and go back out again. Easy eh?

Oh — if George runs out of the hall, go and get the space suit and make him follow you.

PARALLAX (Ocean)

Here's nice little cheat from Ruwan Madurapperuma **who comes from Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire . . .**

Park your ship outside a hanger, select normal kit and exit from the ship. Nip into the hanger and shoot the scientist once to stun him. Swipe his card, leave the hanger and go back to the ship. Leave the ship again and go back into the hanger. The scientist will be walking around again, so shoot him once, steal his card (it'll be a different one), then go back to the ship. Repeat this process as many times as you like. Oh yes, remember that only two cards can be carried at one time, so keep using them to either get lots of credits, buy things or get parts of the code.

Talking of codes . . . numerous people have written to say they've found the five codes for each level. Well, here they are . . .

STACK
JEWEL
PARCH
SALON
GLOBE

WARHAWK (Firebird)

Last month there were some POKEs for Warhawk **which were supposed to disable sprite collision detection. Fab 'n' cool, but the big problem is they made your ship invisible. Never fear, here are some better ones — courtesy of** Jonathan Kendall **from Norwich. They do the same but keep the ship visible. Once the game has loaded, reset the computer . . .**

POKE 27090,234
POKE 27091,234
POKE 27092,234

Then SYS 24604 **to restart the game.**

LOADAGAME (Players)

Not exactly a cheat mode . . . stop the tape once the Loadagame **starts and you'll be able to keep on playing until you complete it, even after the time limit runs out. Thank you** John Earls **of Bletchley, Milton Keynes for that positive gem of a tip.**

SUMMER GAMES I (Epyx/US Gold)

Think your times on the 4 x 400 metre relay are good, eh? Then G Pernell **from Warley, West Midlands has some news for you . . .**

Wait for the gun to go off and let the computer pacer shoot off. Then move the joystick right and keep pressing the fire button (or use an auto fire). If you keep doing this you should get times like 2.13.00 or even less! Wowzer yowzer!

FUNGUS (Players)

Don't be an egotist and type in your name on the highscore table — type EASY GAME **instead. Why? Cos if you do you'll be rewarded with more Fungi (Funguses?) than you could ever imagine. Ta very much to our Deutchland readers,** Hans Vokenbourne **and** Kurt Reber.

IRIDIS ALPHA (Hewsons/Llamasoft)

Hmm . . . what's this? It's unlimited lives for Jeffrey M's latest and greatest, that's what. If you load the game then reset the 64 you'll be able to enter these Andrew and Johnny Grifo **POKEs:**

POKE 23060,76
POKE 23061,30
POKE 23062,90

SYS 16384 **to restart the game with unlimited Gilbies. Or, if you're far less greedy, you can . . .**

POKE 16411,(number of lives from 0 to 128)

. . . then SYS 16384 **to restart.**

FAIRLIGHT (The Edge)

Ta very much to Jim Blackler **from the cold and wintry city of Lancaster (well, it was cold and wintry when I last went there) for these cool POKEs. When the game loads, reset the computer and type in:**

POKE 34413,234
POKE 34414,234
POKE 34420,234
POKE 34421,234

Once you've done that, SYS 20992 **to start the game with infinite energy. How nice.**

FIST II (Melbourne House)

Quite a few people have spotted this humerous little tiplet, so thanks to all of you for sending it in. If you fancy making the game even more boring by skipping any fighting bits, then this is what you should do . . .

Just before you meet a nasty, keep the joystick pushed left or right (whichever way you're walking) then press the RESTORE **key. Keep doing this until your man starts sliding along on his own. You will then skate past the place where your opponent is supposed to be. Once you're safe, press** RESTORE **again and continue on your long quest. If you want a real laugh, keep somersaulting and pressing** RESTORE **. . . you'll get a completely new game —** The Way of the Floating Karate Matey. **Har har!**

BOMBJACK (Elite)

If you want a birruvva laff, like, put Bombjack **in the C2N (if you have the game) and when it's loaded reset the computer. Why? So's you can enter this POKE from** Ray Webb **of Bayswater 6053, Western Australia . . .**

POKE 5112,0

. . . followed by SYS 3101 **to start the game and become an indestructible Jack.**

MARBLE MADNESS (Ariolasoft)

If you're already a bit bored with this rather poor conversion, then here's a little tip to extend its playing life a bit. See the picture below? Yes? Good. What you should do is jump the gap at the end of the first left hand zig-zag, then plonk your marble on exactly the same position as the one in the picture. Wait until the time counts down to 13 and you'll be magically transported to the Water Level! **Cripes-a-lawdy! Thanks to someone called** SIR **from London for this useful information.**

TIPS

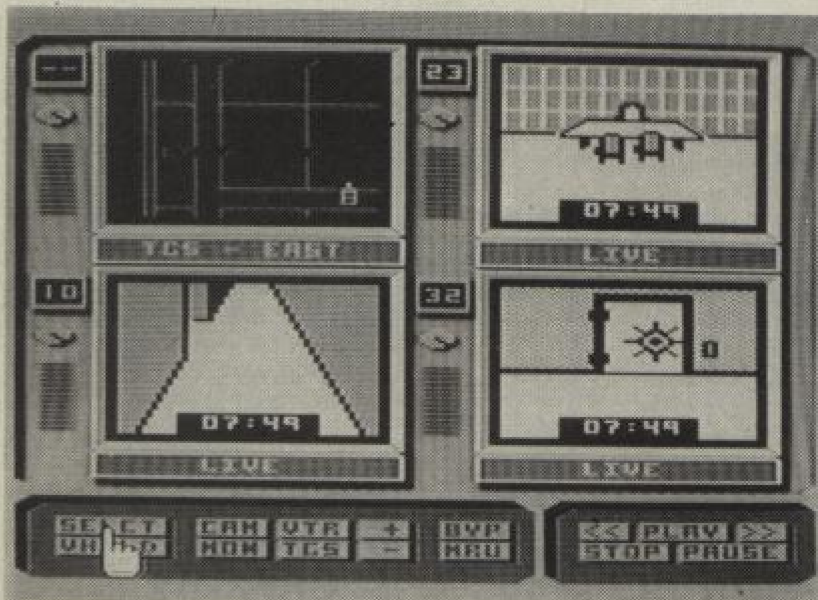
HACKER II (Activision)

Darren Millburn from **Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire has discovered some codes which you can input when confronted with the 'Logon Please' prompt:**

00987
TITLE
DEMO
COVER
PAM
WAMI
DAME
GOMES

Try any one of the following during the game:

RED 7
WHITE 6
BLUE 1
WHITE 50
07041776



ROBIN IN THE WOOD (Odin)

Not doing enough robbin' in the wood? Well, ne'er ye fear, oh fearless 64 gamer, here's a listing which will give you infinite Robins for your pleasure and enjoyment. Many thanks go to Jim Blackler **from Lancaster for this listing. Right, first of all type:**

```
10 FOR A=49152 TO
49164:READ B:POKE A,B:NEXT
20 DATA
169,248,141,220,8,169,252,141,2
21,8,76,0,1
```

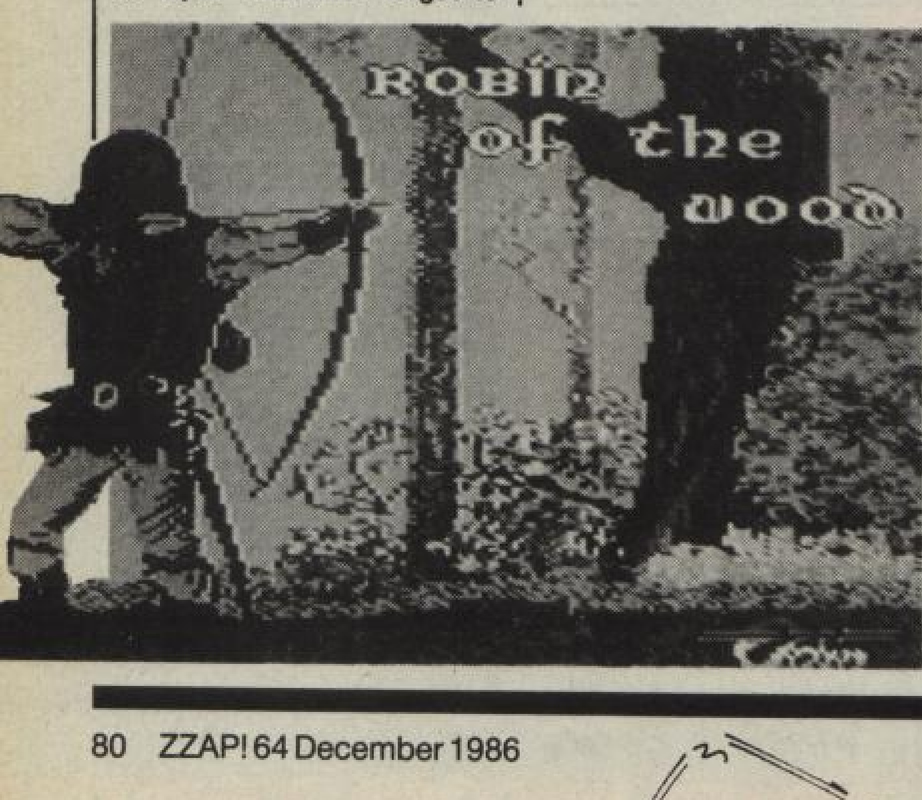
Now RUN **it. When you've done that type** LOAD **and press play on tape. You didn't forget to bung the tape in first did you? When the computer resets type** POKE 1005,192:RUN **to load the rest of the program. The computer will continue to load the game, then it'll reset allowing you to type:**

POKE 40857,165
For infinite lives

If you want to change the colour scheme:

POKE 36214,(colour from 0 to 15)

When you're happy you can type SYS 36414 to start the program.



RAMBO (Ocean)

Here's a little something for those of you who're still having trouble with Mr Well-Hard-Right-Wing-Facist-Bully-Boy, courtesy of Trolly Game Hacker II **who just happens to live in Bolton, Lancs. Get your** Rambo **cassette, plonk it into the C2N, rewind it, type in the listing,** RUN **it, then 'press play on tape' . . .**

```
30 PRINT CHR$ (147)
40 FOR A=304 TO 317: READ B: POKE A,B: NEXT
50 FOR A=32768 TO 32855: READ B: POKE A,B: NEXT
60 POKE 53280,0
70 SYS 32768
100 DATA 169,173,141,143,12,234,234
110 DATA 234,234,234,76,223,65,0
120 DATA 169,128,133,157,160,1,152
130 DATA 170,32,186,255,169,0,133
140 DATA 183,32,213,255,169,31,141
150 DATA 150,3,169,128,141,151,1
160 DATA 76,99,3,32,76,128,169
170 DATA 54,173,225,65,162,0,189
180 DATA 55,128,189,228,65,232,224
190 DATA 32,208,245,76,0,64,173
200 DATA 0,64,141,0,160,169,11
210 DATA 141,17,208,76,84,164,84
220 DATA 82,79,76,76,89,33,169
230 DATA 48,141,60,65,169,1,141
240 DATA 61,65,96,234,234,234,234
```

By the way, Trolly sends apologies to Forest **for using his program . . .**

DAN DARE (Virgin)

Last month Gazza Pee promised a map and a full solution to Dan Dare. **So here they are in glorious technicolour tiporamavision. I hope you all realise that if** Matthew Mugrove **from Bracknell, Berks,** Hok Pang **from Eastcote, Middlesex and** Doug Johns **of Portsmouth, Hants hadn't sent in the tips, then they wouldn't be here. (Oh, something wrong with my solution, eh? —GP)**

Make your way to the reeds and cut them down (use the map to find the location). Enter the subterranean lake and swim to the left, using the reed as a snorkel. Keep going until you hit a submerged object and pick it up — it's a highly useful crowbar. Once it's safely in your possession, swim right and keep going until you reach a ladder. Climb up the ladder and walk right until you reach the steps. Go down to enter the underground cave system. Walk left and keep going until you find a location with two vines.

Climb down the longest vine, cut off the vine to the left and tie it to the piece on the right. Climb down the tied vines and when you reach the bottom walk to the right and open the hatch with the crowbar. Collect the fruit and climb back up the vine.

Walk right, until you come to a passage 'too narrow for you to pass through'. Throw the fruit. Stripy will chase after it and return bearing the torch, which he will duly give to you. Go back to the vine room and climb down the vine again. Enter the hatch, switch on the torch and climb out again.

Climb up to the top of the vine and cut it down, then walk to the vine on the left and climb down until you can go no further. Tie the two vines together, then climb down again. Walk left until you find the hatch you opened earlier, then go through it to enter the Treen's underground complex.

Climb down the long ladder and walk right. Climb down any one of the three ladders and walk left to find a Treen guarding a closed door. Use the crowbar to open the door, then walk left. Kill any Treens you encounter to get special pass cards (you need three of them).

Make your way down the network of ladders and gantries until you come to an unlit room. Use the torch to find your way about, then go down until you come across two cells which you should open with your pass cards to free your friends. Make your way back up to the darkened room and walk to the left — you should now be standing in front of a large laser. Don't use it just yet.

Walk left until you enter a complex of interchangeable mirrors. There are three main reactors hidden in the complex. You must set the mirrors so that when the laser beam is fired by the cannon, it is deflected by the mirrors to the hole in front of the reactor. Remember to destroy the reactors in order (look at the numbers stamped on the side of each one). Use the map to see where the computers are, then adjust the mirrors accordingly.

Once you've blown up all three computers, go up to the third computer where you will find a door has opened. Walk left, killing any Treens as you make your way to the Mekon's lair. Lob ten grenades at the Mekon, avoiding his bursts of laser fire.

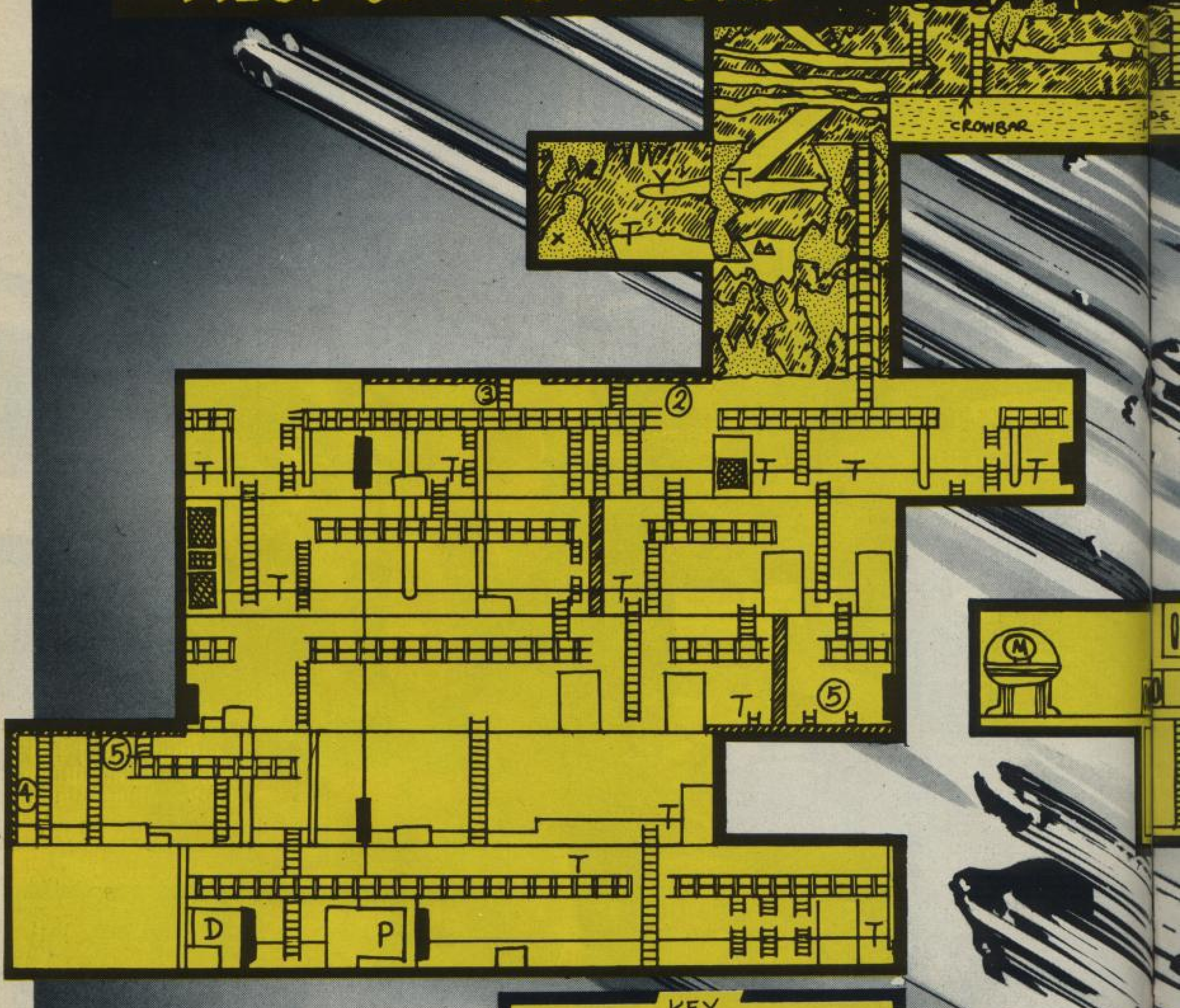
Once you've disposed of the green bonced one you are given two minutes to escape. There's an easy way out, but that's the bit you've got to figure out for yourself . . .




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DAN DARE

PILOT OF THE FUTURE





1
1
3
2
3
2
4
1

EXPERT ADVICE

FOR USERS OF TRILOGIC'S EXPERT CARTRIDGE

Phew, I thought you'd never turn to this page. Cor (I hear you say) **Dragons Lair** cheats. Okay the cheats are fine, but I seem to have some difficulty in getting off the Deadly Chequered Board. Can anybody help?

KNIGHT RIDER (OCEAN)

Unlimited time . . .

At step 3 type:
.F 8C82 8C84 EA (RETURN)
.F 8C8C 8C8E EA (RETURN)
.F 8C96 8C98 EA (RETURN)
.F 8CA0 8C98 EA (RETURN)
.F 8CAA 8CAC EA (RETURN)
.F 8CB4 8CB6 EA (RETURN)
.F 8CBE 8CC0 EA (RETURN)
4) As normal.

To reach next destination quicker . . .

At step 3 type:
.F 8856 8856 FF (RETURN)
4) As normal.

HAPPIEST DAYS OF YOUR LIFE (Firebird)

Infinite Energy . . .

At step 3 type:
.F CED5 CED7 EA (RETURN)
4) As normal.

It's a good job I found out how to speed this game up, 'cos the speed at which the bloke walks and jumps is disgusting!

At step 3 type:
.F B8F6 B8F6 50 (RETURN)
The '50' in the above line may be changed to any hexidecimal number between 00 (very fast) and FF (mega slow).
4) As normal.

ASTERIX (Melbourne House)

Infinite Lives:

At step 3 type:
.F 215C 215E EA (RETURN)
4) As normal.

IRIDIS ALPHA (Llamasoft/Hewson)

Infinite lives . . .

1) LOAD the Expert with V1.8/2.8
2) LOAD and RUN the game as normal. When the game has fully loaded, the monitor prompt will appear automatically. As usual, the four digit number will appear in the top left hand corner. Change the numbers to read 4000, then press RETURN.
3) Type:
.F 5A14 5A16 EA (RETURN)
4) As normal.

MISSION AD (Odin)

Infinite Lives:

1) LOAD the Expert with V1.7/2.7
2) LOAD and RUN the game as normal. When game has fully loaded tap the RESTORE key lightly.
3) Type:
.F 52CE 52CF EA (RETURN)
4) Now type R (RETURN) or add more cheats if there are any.

DRAGONS LAIR (Software Projects)

Infinite Lives (TAPE version only) . . .

1) As normal.
2) Put the Expert switch to the OFF position and LOAD the game as normal. When game has loaded, zero the tape counter and press the stop button on the data recorder, then put the Expert switch to the ON position. Now tap the RESTORE key.
3) Type:
.F 0FE5 0FE5 E6 (RETURN)
4) As normal. Now put the Expert switch to the OFF position. Press play on the data recorder, then press the space bar.

Infinite Lives (DISK version only) . . .



1) As normal.
2) As above but put Expert to ON when the screen with the Archway appears. Tap the RESTORE key. As usual, a four digit number will appear in the top left hand corner. Change the number to read '15C8' and press RETURN.
3) Type:
.F 0F42 0F42 E6 (RETURN)
4) As normal. Now put the Expert to the OFF position. All I can say now is play the game . . .



PARALLAX (Ocean)

Firstly I better say thanks to **Andrew Grifo** from Walkdon, Worsley, Nr Manchester for the excellent **Parallax** POKEs in last months ZZAP! They were so good I couldn't resist the temptation to convert them for use with the good old Expert . . .

Elimination of most sprite collision . . .

At step 3 type:
.F 16A4 16A4 60 (RETURN)
4) As normal.

Going through the floor . . .

At step 3 type:
.F 10BB 10BB 60 (RETURN)
4) As normal.

Change the first backdrop colour . . .

At step 3 type:
.F 0A8D 0A8D 01 (RETURN)
4) The 01 in the above line may be changed in any hexidecimal number between 00 (black) and 0F (I've forgotten that colour), otherwise step 4 is as normal.

Change the second backdrop colour . . .

At step 3 type:
.F 0A88 0A88 01 (RETURN)
4) As previous step 4.

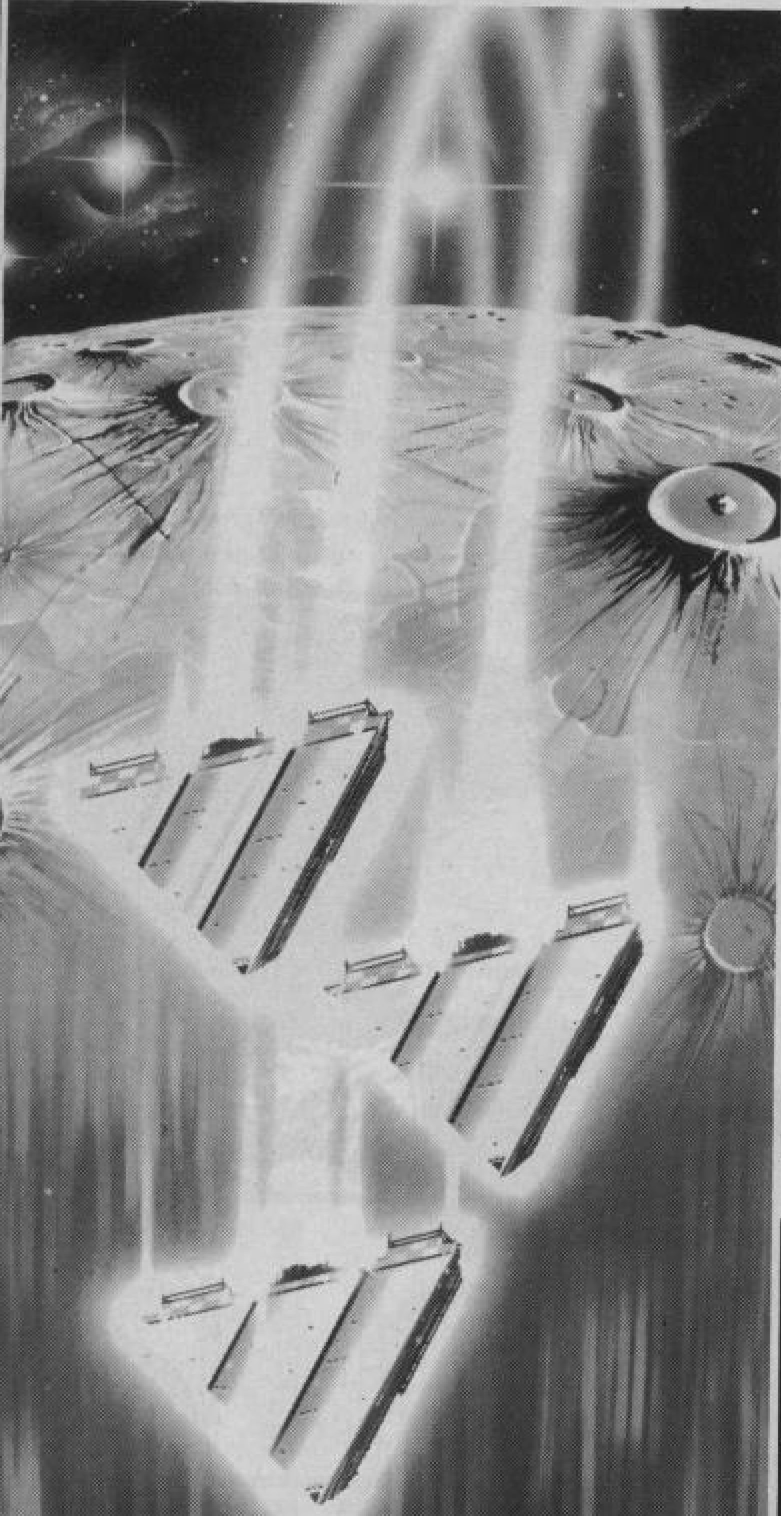
So Riggers is in charge of the tips section — but what can you do, I mean we all have to put up with the riggers of life!

I might as well say the usual boring stuff . . . don't you dare miss the big bumper Christmas issue of ZZAP! 'cos the EXPERT ADVICE column will have cheats for **Jack the Nipper**, **AlleyKat**, **Druid**, **Sanxion**, and many more . . . I hope! Until next month then . . .

TAZ

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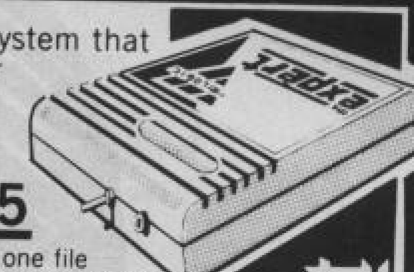
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SANXION

Alan Smith **from Whitehall, Bristol is one cool dude when it comes to POKEing around. Look at what he's got for you — some nice infinite 'look no reset' lives POKEs which you can type in. OK, so it's a bit on the long side, but it's well worth typing in. Anyroad, bung in ye cassette, type in ver listing,** RUN **it and press play on the C2N. Everything else is taken care of . . .**

```
0 REM INFINITE LIVES POKES FOR SANXION
1 REM BY ALAN SMITH
10 A=49152
15 FOR T=0 TO 92: READ Z
20 POKE A+T,Z: L=L+Z: NEXT T
30 IF L<>11511 THEN PRINT ''ERROR IN DATA'':END
40 S=679
45 FOR Y=0 TO 45: READ F
50 POKE S+Y,F: P=P+F: NEXT Y
55 IF P<>5581 THEN PRINT ''ERROR IN DATA'':END
65 PRINT CHR$(147) ''INSERT SANXION CASSETTE THEN PRESS
ANY KEY''
70 GET K$: IF K$='''' THEN 70
75 SYS 49152
85 DATA 169, 1, 170, 168, 32, 186, 255
90 DATA 169, 0, 32, 189, 255
100 DATA 169, 1, 32, 213, 255
110 DATA 120, 160, 171, 169, 3, 89, 80, 3, 153
120 DATA 80, 3, 136, 208, 247
130 DATA 169, 76, 141, 162, 3, 169, 58, 141
135 DATA 163, 3, 169, 192, 141, 164, 3
140 DATA 169, 27, 141, 13, 220, 169, 0
145 DATA 162, 144, 76, 83, 3
150 DATA 169, 76, 133, 232, 169, 73, 133
155 DATA 233, 169, 192, 133, 234, 76, 121, 3
160 DATA 169, 76, 141, 191, 3, 169, 167, 141, 192, 3
165 DATA 169, 2, 141, 193, 3, 169, 96, 133, 232, 96
170 DATA 104, 104, 169, 169, 141, 191, 3, 169
175 DATA 16, 141, 192, 3, 169, 44, 141, 193, 3
180 DATA 169, 76, 133, 232, 169, 199, 133
185 DATA 233, 169, 2, 133, 234, 76, 153, 0
190 DATA 169, 234, 141, 62, 55, 141, 63, 55
195 DATA 141, 64, 55, 76, 112, 150
```

• BARRIER LAYOUT FOR END OF LEVEL 2



• BARRIER LAYOUT FOR END OF LEVEL 5

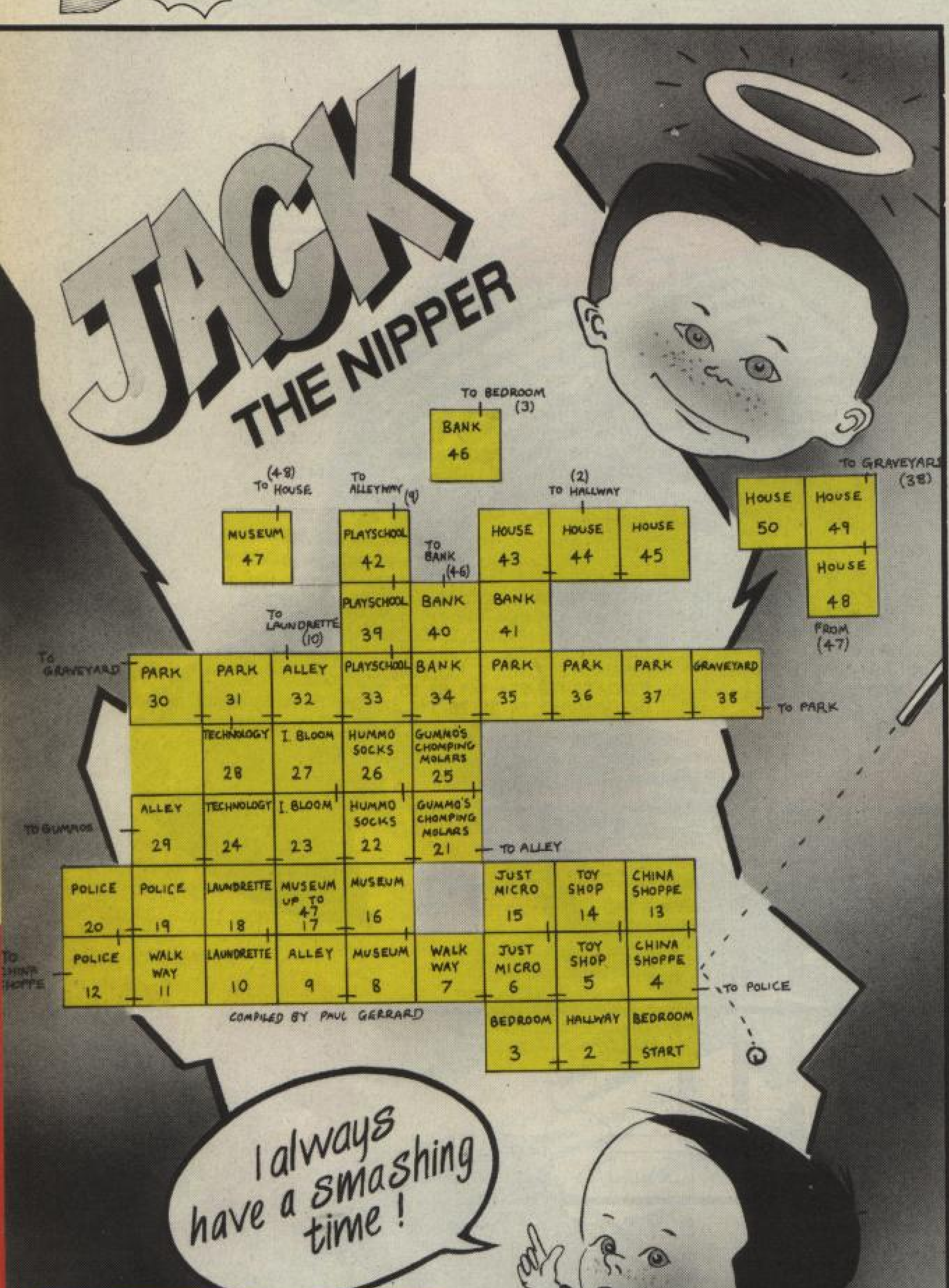


• BARRIER LAYOUT FOR END OF LEVEL 8



• BARRIER LAYOUT FOR BONUS LEVEL 3





JACK THE NIPPER (Gremlin Graphics)

Trying to be wicked and naughty, but can't quite do it right? Frustrated about being a goody-goody? Well, if you read on and use the following tips in conjunction with the map you'll be able to become a real teeny terror. Diolch yn fawr i Leon Baird **who hails from Camberley in Surrey.**

If you're a musical nipper you'll want some music to accompany your wickedness, so grab the Walkman body from the room next to where you start, go out of the house and get the headphones. Both articles will disappear and the music will play.

Go back to the house and get the pea-shooter, then go to the Police Station and take the battery. Go to Just Micros and smash the mirror, then go round to the Launderette, get the glue and take it round to the False Teeth Factory and jump onto the conveyor belt to gum all the teeth up.

Take the weight from the Prison and jump onto the conveyor belt in the Hummo Sock Factory to wreck it. When you've done that, use the flower killer (found on the top shelf in the I Bloom flower shop) to kill all the flowers in the garden beside the graveyard. Once you've done that, take the fertilizer from the graveyard by shooting all the ghosts. When it's safely in your possession, wheel the fertilizer round to the screen where you dropped the poison.

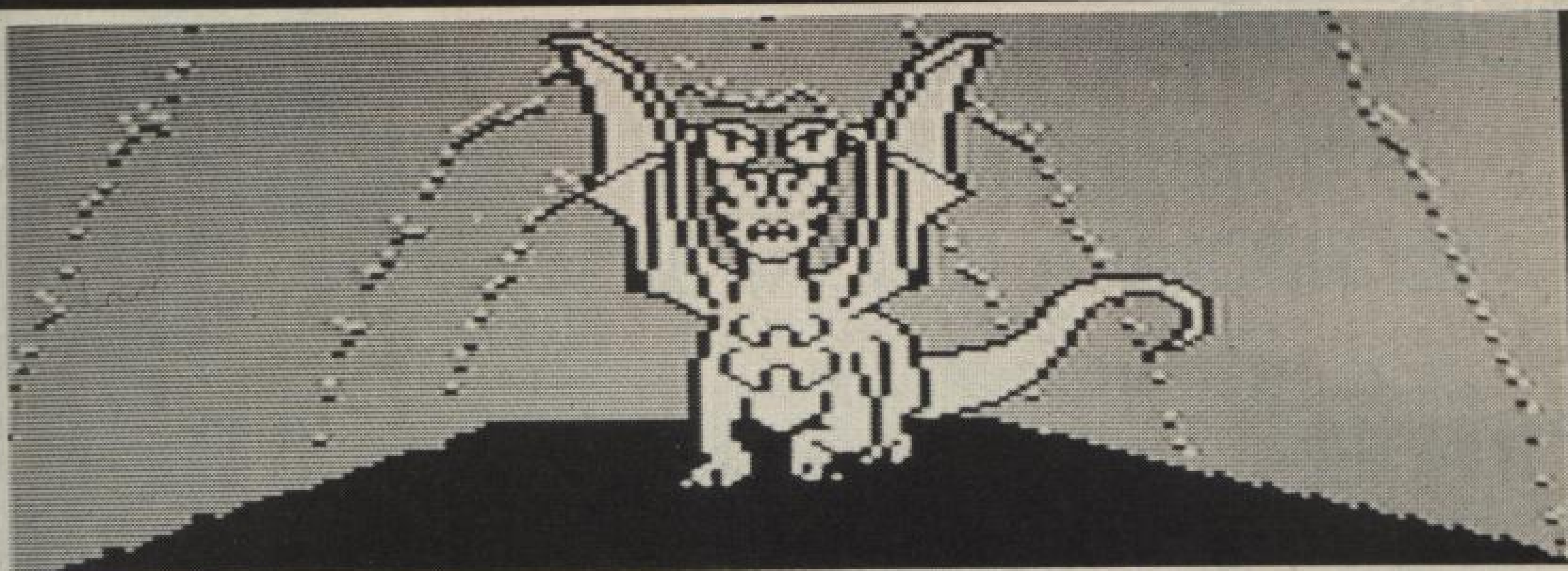
Now go and get the key from the other part of the garden and enter the bank. Drop the key and take the disk to the Technology Research Lab, then jump onto the computer to the right hand side of the screen. Go back to the bank and pick up the key which opens the grating. Open the grating and crawl through the hole, not forgetting to drop any objects you're carrying before you enter. Take the box (it's washing powder) and the credit card with an A on it from the top of the cupboard. When you've done that, take the powder to the Launderette and jump in front of all three machines.

Use the credit card at the Bank by jumping at the dispenser, then take the potty from the Play School and drop it in the China Shoppe (after breaking the two plates on the top shelf). Take the clay from the same screen as the potty and drop it in the first screen of the play school. This, for some unknown reason, makes a dog (weird!), so leave quickly.

Take the key from the bank to the museum — this opens the grating. When you go through the grating it's advisable to take a pea—shooter with you, as there are a whole load of ghosts in there. Go through the grating and take the bomb from the fireplace, drop the pea-shooter and take the horn. Once you've done that, honk the horn at the cat in the Police Station, in the living room of Jack's house and in the play school to score enough on the naughtyometer to finish the game. Whoopee!!

Don't forget to break everything once you've used it, and shoot people, animals and ghosts with your pea-shooter to increase your rating.

If you're still having hassle being a naughty person (says a lot for the earlier tips) you can always cop out and type ZAPIT **on the title screen. The border will go white and you'll be able to play the game as an invincible Nipper (perish the thought). Cheers to** Andrew and Johnny Grifo **from Worsley, Manchester.**



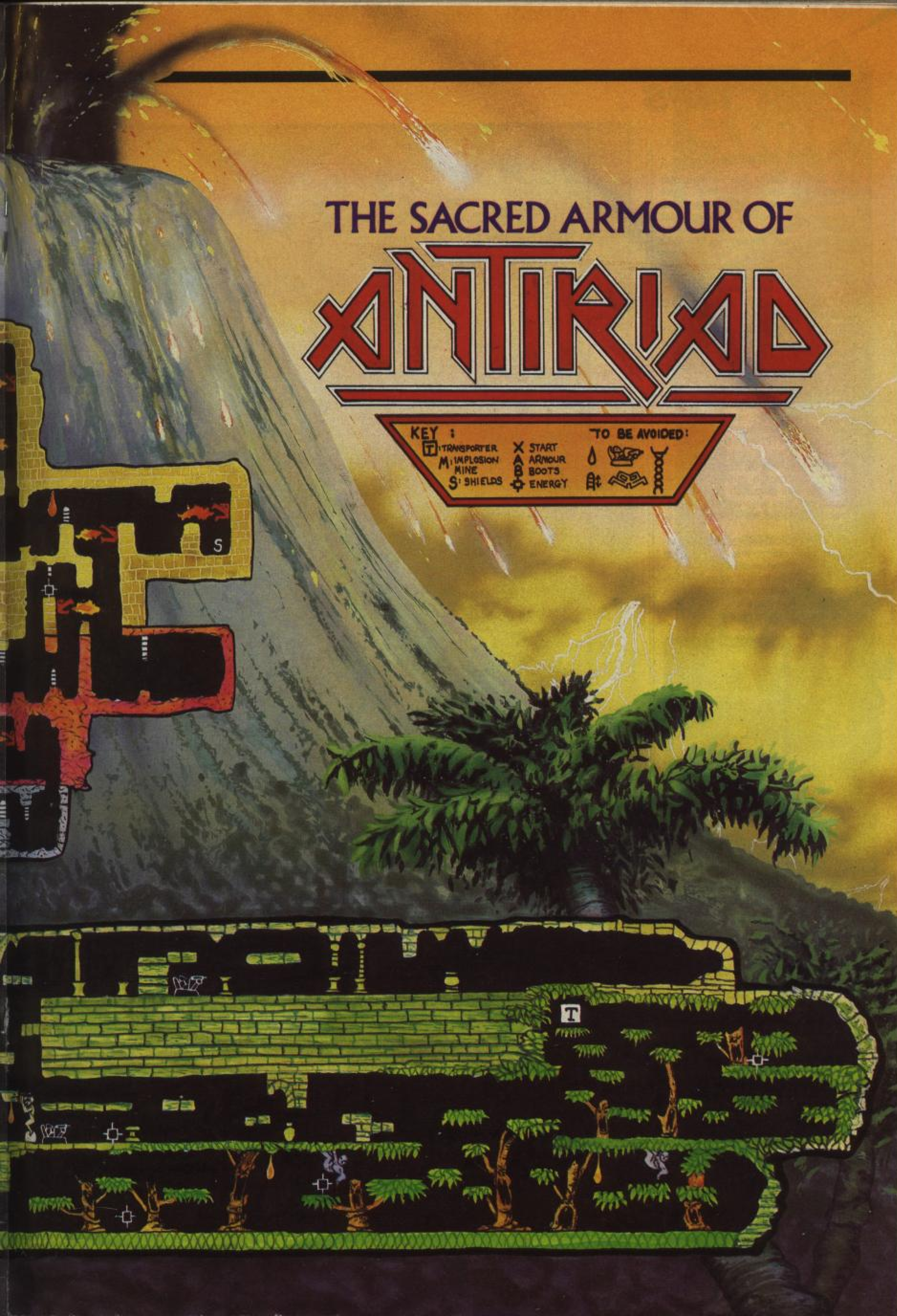
EIDOLON

(Activision)

Here's a well fab listing which gives you unlimited energy and unlimited time to bash those tres horrible dragons. Mucho gracias to Cuddly Chrix **who forms half of the ever-so-whacky-and-zany Sensible Software team. Plonk the tape into the C2N, type in the listing, RUN it, then press play on tape.**

```
10 FOR A=320 TO 383:READ B:C=C+B:POKE A,B: NEXT
20 IF C<>6983 THEN PRINT ''ERROR! (BLEEP)'':END
30 PRINT CHR$ (147) ''INSERT EIDOLON, THEN . . . ''
40 SYS 320
500 DATA 169,1,170,160,0,32,186,255,169
510 DATA 0,32,189,255,162,1,160,8,32
520 DATA 213,255,169,76,141,242,3,169
530 DATA 102,141,243,3,169,1,141,244,3
540 DATA 76,13,8,169,1,141,29,16,169
550 DATA 115,141,28,16,76,0,16,169,173
560 DATA 141,238,92,169,205,141,78,115
570 DATA 76,0,76
```


M
B
A
X


THE SACRED ARMOUR OF
ANTIRIAD
KEY :
T: TRANSPORTER
M: IMPLOSION MINE
S: SHIELDS
X START
A ARMOUR
B BOOTS
ENERGY
TO BE AVOIDED:
S
T

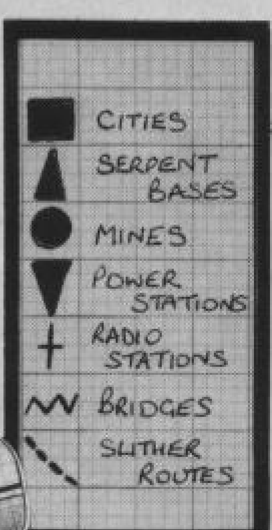
ZZAP! TIPS

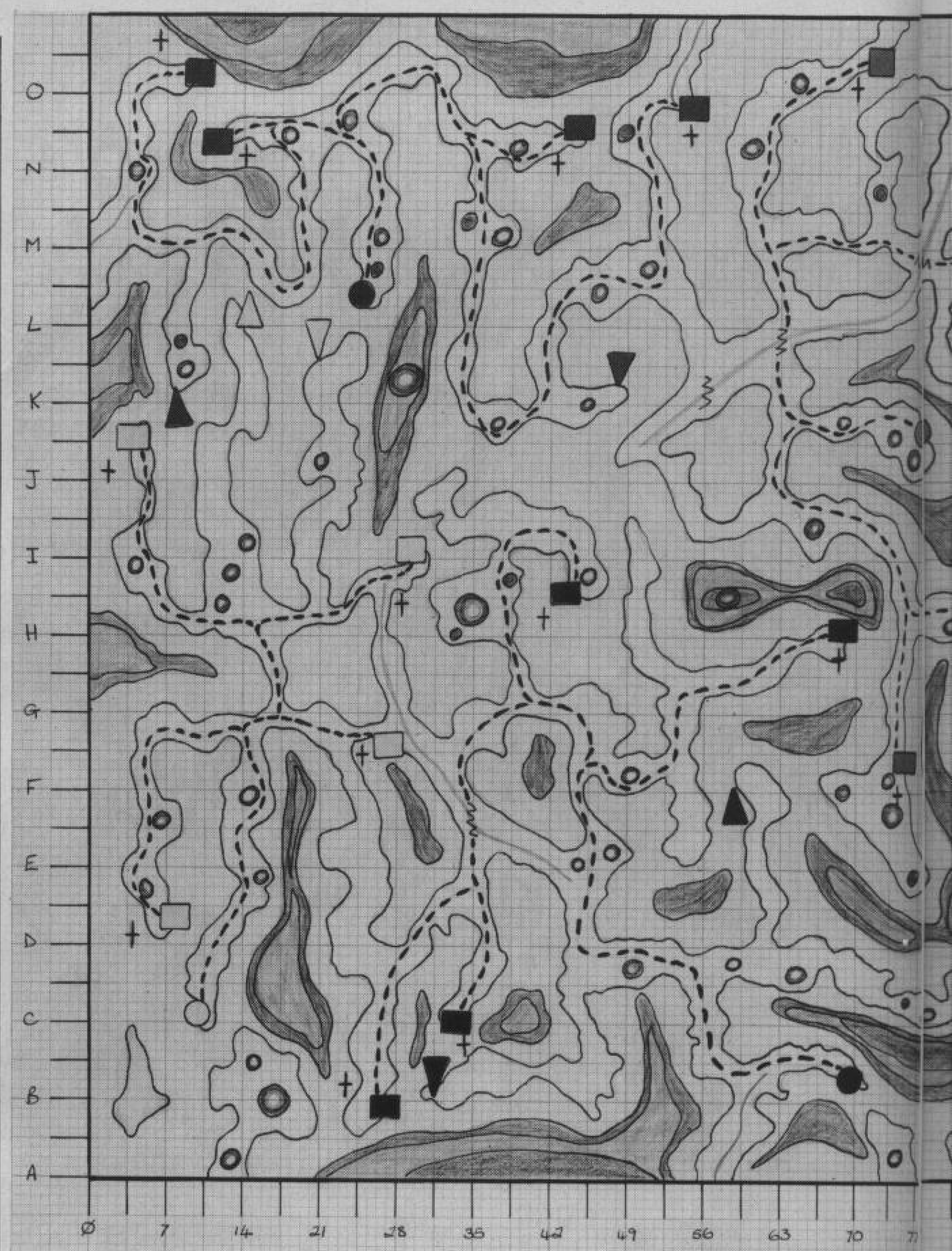
ZOIDS (Martech)

At long last the numerous requests for Zoids **tips have been answered. Mucho gracias to** Stephen Fenton **(Ilkley, West Yorks),** Jason Nock **(Cradley Heath, West Midlands),** Foxbite **(Tunstall) and** S Fisher **(Wilmslow, Cheshire) for their invaluable advice.**

A COUPLE OF THINGS TO REMEMBER . . .

- Turn your 'info bank' OFF as soon as you start a game and whenever you find a piece of Zoidzilla, otherwise the radio station will detect your scan for Zoidzilla and dispatch Spinebacks.
- Don't attack Slitherzoids with your railguns — soften up the swines with a couple of missiles first, then let rip with the railgun.
- Never attack a power station — a task force will be dispatched.
- Don't attack a radio station — the city will dispatch Hellrunners to other cities who will in turn dispatch Spinebacks to your location.
- Don't attack a serpent base (unless you enjoy the game over routine).
- Watch how long it takes Slitherzoids to travel between the mine and city, then you'll know how long you have to destroy the city.





THE RAILGUN

A very important thing to learn is how to use the railgun effectively. (It's worth having a couple of games where you just blast anything that trundles your way). The best thing to do is time your attack carefully — just before you think the diamond will turn red, press the fire button and unleash a hail of bullets. When you're down to single shot firing, wait a couple of seconds for the gun to reload, then repeat the process.

JAMMING

A really difficult, but crucial part of the game is learning how to jam radio transmissions. If you follow these tips and use them in conjunction with the rest of the tips, you should be able to do it competently.

Once you've selected jamming, move your cursor to the top icon (carrier wave) and make the appropriate selection, ie: if the carrier wave is one then move the cursor to the top left square and press fire. Next, move the cursor to the middle icon (variable wave) and make the appropriate selection as you did before. When you've done that, move the cursor to the bottom icon (variable wave adjustment) and another three icons will appear.

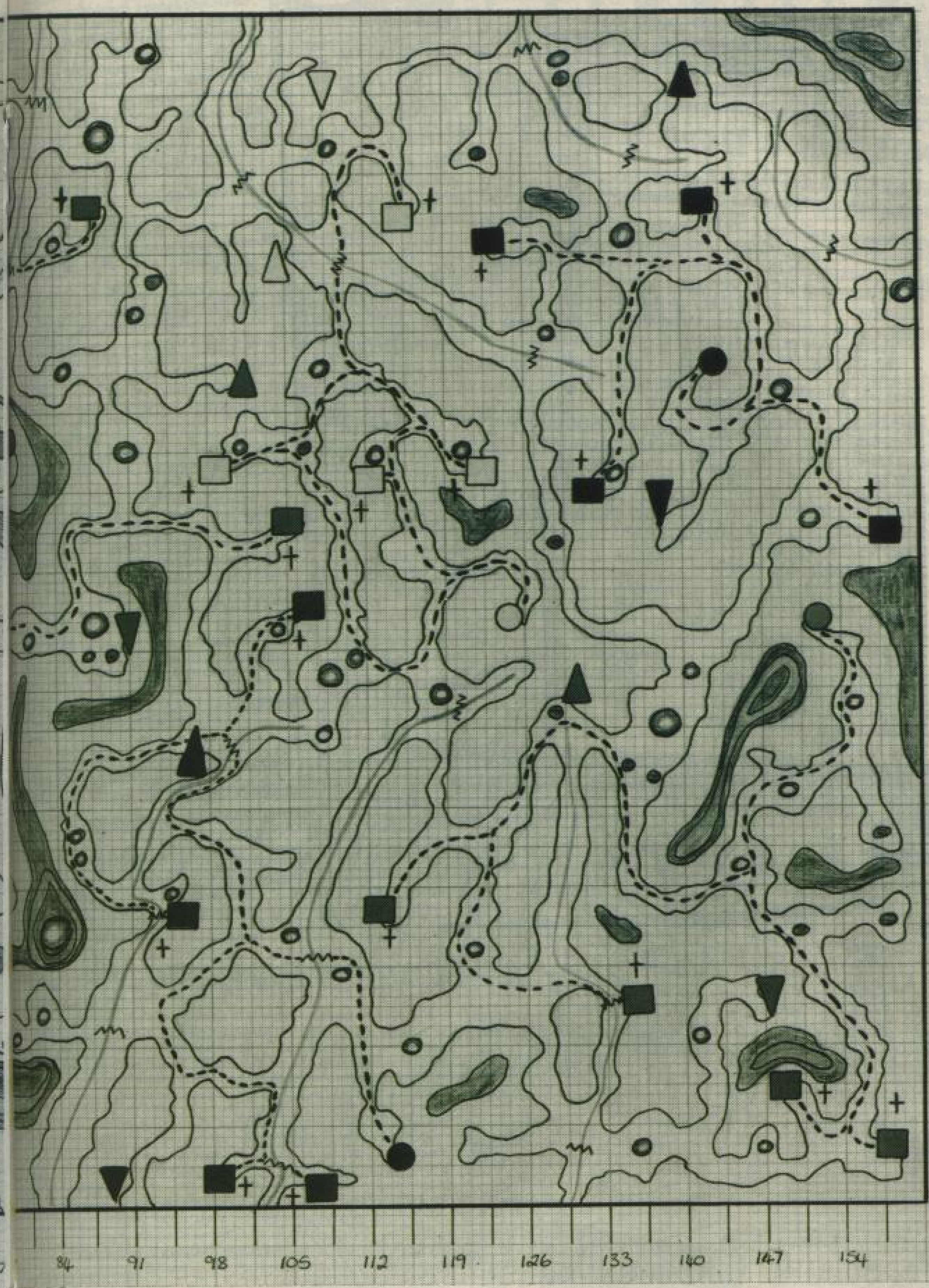
Select the left hand icon (frequency) and put the cursor on one of the arrow icons (depending on which way you want to move the marker). Select the centre icon, then select the arrow icon and move the marker to the relevant position. Once that's done, select the third icon and adjust the phase until the waves are identical. Remember: there's no set phase to a signal — every time your Zoid moves, the signal changes.

When the waves are identical, activate the transmit icon at the bottom. If the waves are the same, a straight line will appear in the top display.

ATTACKING A CITY

When you want to attack a city, stop your Zoid so the city is on the edge of the screen (as far away as possible) and jam the shields (using the above method). Be careful if a Slitherzoid approaches when you're trying to jam the signal — the Slitherzoid may return with a Spineback.

Move your Zoid next to the city and jam the shields again. Select your missiles and fire at the city — but beware: a Spineback will be dispatched. Select the railgun, destroy the Spineback and pick up



the power pod. Fire another missile and destroy the Spineback, then fire another two missiles to destroy the city. Don't forget to pick up all the debris, though.

If you find a piece of Zoidzilla, leave the network and don't stop for anything. Try to find a hiding place in the next network, so your Zoid can recover. If you use this method correctly you should be able to destroy all of the cities.

MORE USEFUL THINGS

Always note the ID number of any Zoid you destroy, especially the city-repairing Slitherzoids. If you destroy Slitherzoid 5.3 for example, city 5.3 can't be repaired.

Enemy missiles are always a problem, but they can be taken care of if you remember these three points . . .

- If an AA missile is lobbed in your general direction, use the sonic flare to get rid of it.
- AT's can be disposed of by throwing a heat flare in front of it.
- Redhorn the Terrible's AE's can be jammed. (If not, run like hell).

Just like the old man said to his wife: 'that's all for this month' . . . a cliche, I know, but I can't think of anything better to say at the moment. Thanks to all of you who sent in stuff this month, I hope you'll be just as busy next month. If you're not this section won't be here! Anyway, maps, POKEs, solutions, cheques and little sisters to: ZZAP! TIPS, PO BOX 10, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1DB. By the way, please don't send any personal correspondence — I'm afraid there's no guarantee of reply, not even with an SAE.

Evesham Micros

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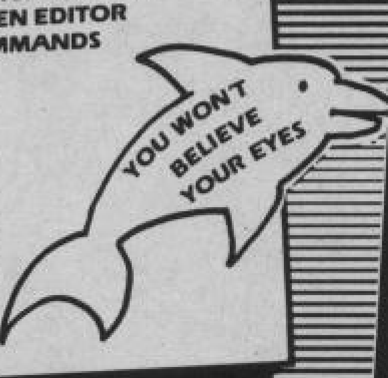
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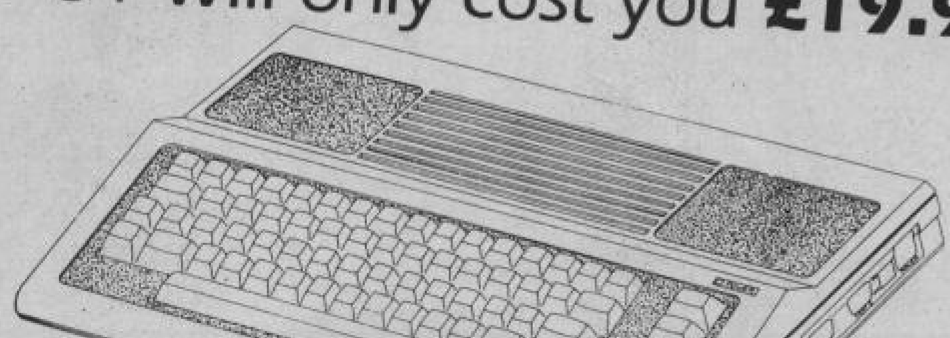
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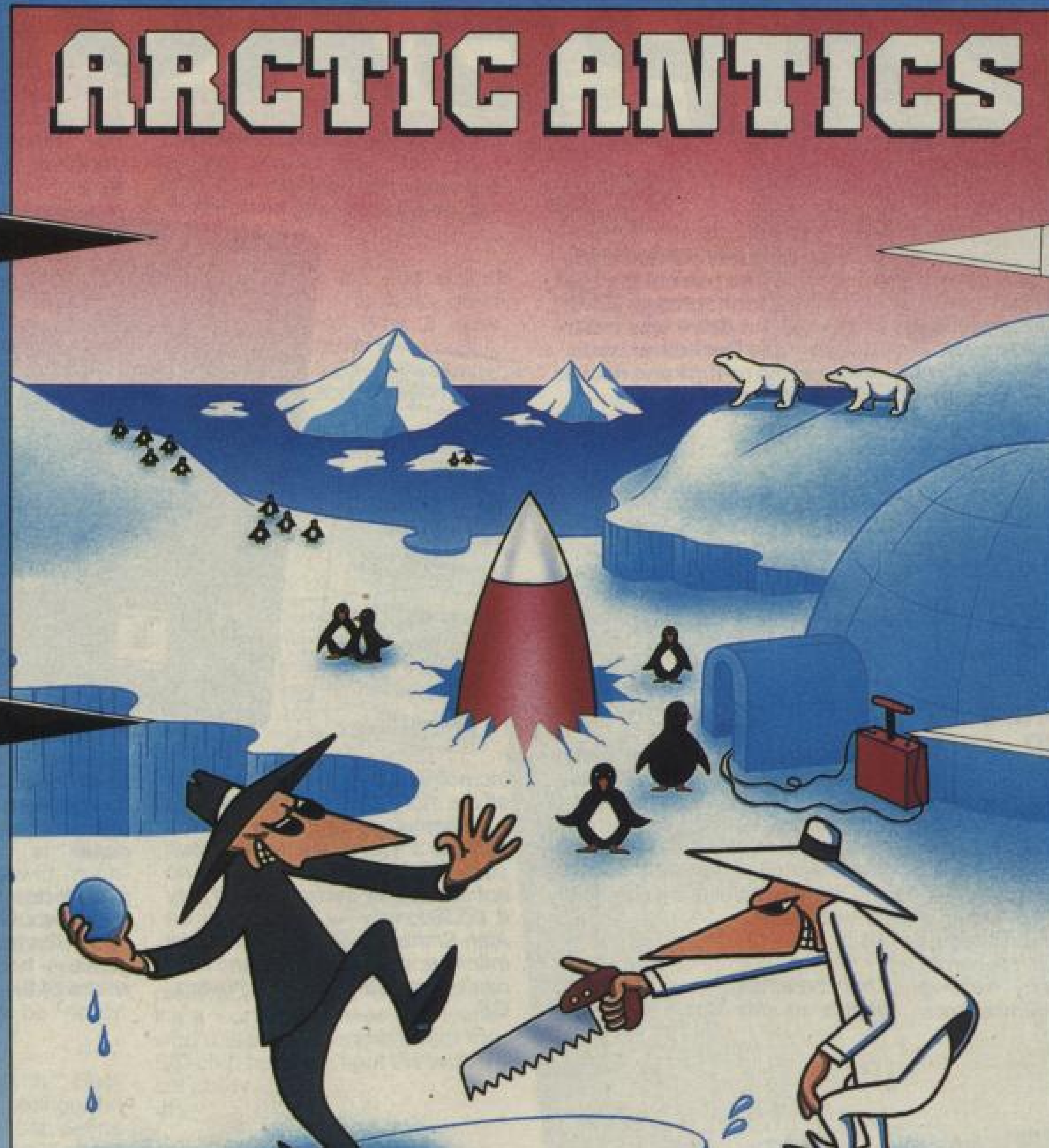
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ZZAPBACK!

Back to those hazy, lazy days of last year we go in this portion of the magazine devoted to past events. This month we go back to the cold and wintry clime of November 1985 and take a look through ZZAP! issue eight. The month might have been cold but there was much Sizzling between the warm and cosy pages of the December issue. The ever dynamic duo, Gaz and Jaz, look over the ratings and decide whether their judgements were right or wrong.

GAMES ZZAPBACKED

SCARABAEUS
ACE
BATALYX
WHO DARES WINS II
ELECTROSOUND

SCARABAEUS

Ariolasoft

In this unusual 3D realtime arcade adventure you have to brave a dark and musty tomb in an attempt to find the great emerald Scarabaeus. The many exciting puzzles and intense atmosphere got everyone raving . . . 'This is one hell of a smart game that no self respecting Commodore owner should overlook', Gary gibbered. Jools judged it 'Brilliant! Miss it if you dare', while Sean spewed superlatives: 'it's brilliant!'

This is a fabulous arcade adventure which is — as far as I'm concerned — still unequalled on the Commodore. The atmosphere generated is superb (especially the breathing/heartbeat sounds) and the 3D graphics are absolutely marvellous.
JR

The breathing and heartbeat effects in this game create an incredible atmosphere, making it all the more absorbing to play. It's a shame Scarabaeus didn't achieve anything greater than cult status. Ah well, there's no accounting for taste . . . I still play it occasionally — more so since Alan Smith provided some crucial infinite energy POKEs — and I still can't complete it! Most annoying.
GP

Presentation 90%
Superbly produced game with brilliant film-like opening sequence.

Graphics 96%
Fast 3D scrolling maze and excellent all round appearance.

Sound 98%
Incredibly atmospheric tunes and sound effects — the latter especially!

Hookability 96%
Once you start you really get into it.

Lastability 97%
And there's a lot to do and work out.

Value For Money 93%
A very strange game . . .

Overall 96%
But a brilliant one at that.



(Jaz) I think the ratings still stand. It's a brilliant program which sadly didn't sell as well as it should have done.

(Gaz) It deserved the ratings then, and I wouldn't rate it any lower now. Scarabaeus is an excellent game — hopefully Scarabaeus II *will be of the same quality.*

ACE

Cascade

Though classed as a flight simulator, *ACE* is more of a 3D shoot em up with simulation overtones. There was a fair bit of controversy over the ratings. and to say that Gary Penn wasn't too keen on it is an understatement. 'It didn't appeal to me due to the fact that it was a bit too much of a flight simulator than a game' he bemoaned. Julian and Gazza Liddon, on the other hand, were well impressed: 'the most impressive flight sim on the 64,' reckoned Rignall. The corpulent one confirmed this: 'the best game of this type I've come across'.

Nowadays this game wouldn't do too well, especially when you compare it with something like *Ace of Aces*. Still, it was good fun at the time and rated about right.
JR

I never have liked this 'game' — in my eyes it didn't achieve a suitable balance between a flight simulation and a shoot em up. Still, I wouldn't grumble about its Sizzler rating. Not much, anyway.
GP

Presentation 93%
Good instructions and plenty of options.

Graphics 89%
Fast, effective 3D and some great little touches.

Sound 79%
Efficient jet engine noises, machine gun chatter, explosions and some reasonable speech.

Hookability 89%
A very easy simulator to fly . . .

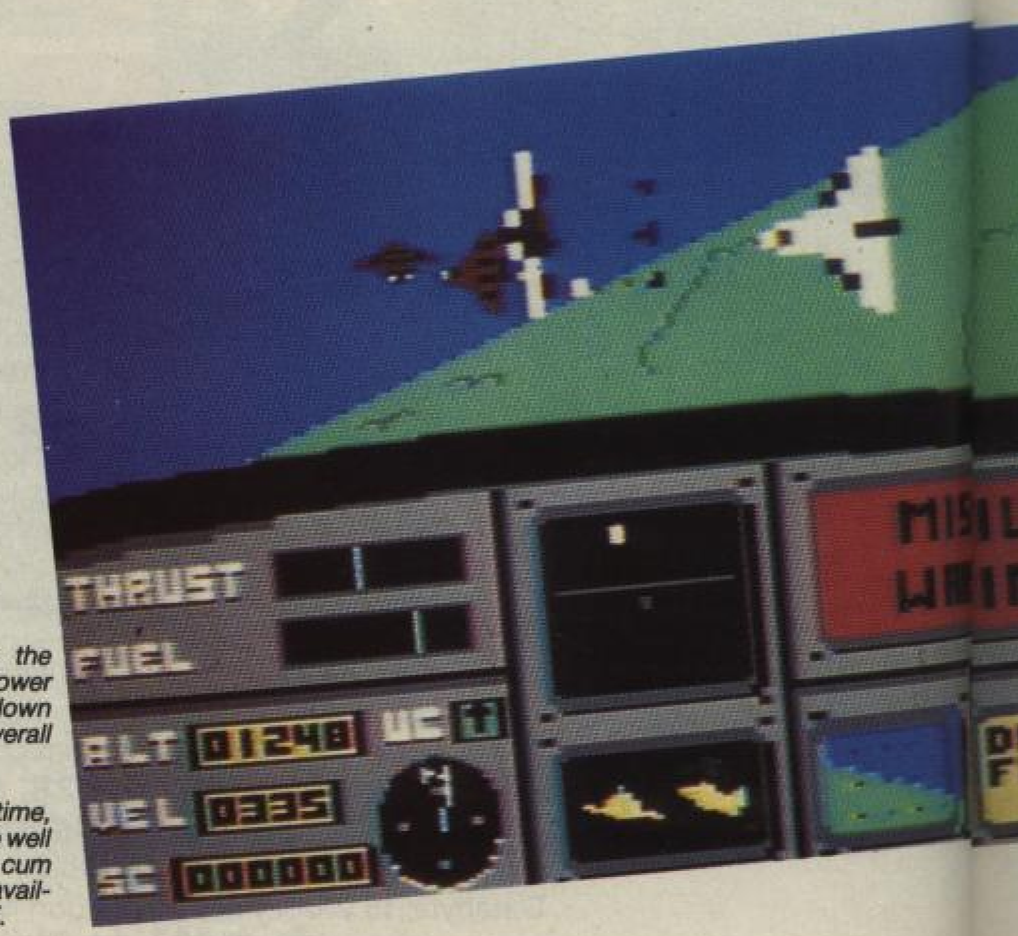
Lastability 91%
. . . with many aspects to practise.

Value For Money 88%
Tiny bit steep.

Overall 90%
Despite reviewing disagreement, generally considered a very impressive flight/combat simulator.

(Jaz) By todays standards the graphics should go down to lower eighties, hook and lastability down a little, and the value and overall down to the lower eighties.

(Gaz) It was rated fairly at the time, but I don't think it would do so well now — better flight simulation cum shoot em ups have become available since the release of ACE.



WHO DARES WINS II

Alligata

The first sequel without a prequel! The original *Who Dares Wins* never appeared in the shops due to court action — Elite felt it was too much like the arcade game *Commando*, to which they had the conversion licence. Whatever its story, the reviewers reactions to *Who Dares Wins II* were very favourable. Gary Liddon was sure 'Alligata have come up with a real classic' and Sean Masterson thought you should 'get your paws on this one'. Julian considered it to be 'one of the top arcade programs of the year'. Gary Penn wasn't available for comment due to illness.

I enjoyed playing this, but got bored with it rather quickly. It's got short-term appeal, but is still better than Elite's official version of *Commando*.
JR

Who Dares Wins II *isn't outstanding, but it's playable and I reckon it was one of the best shoot em ups to be released last year. I wasn't impressed by the graphics and sound, but I liked the game — it's fun and plays a lot better than* Commando.
GP

(Jaz) This hasn't really stood the rigours of time at all. Now, it looks very dated. Graphics down by ten percent, hook and lastability down to the low eighties, and value and overall down by at least fifteen percent.

(Gaz) The graphics and sound were overrated — in fact, I don't think Who Dares Wins II quite deserved the Sizzler award. Still, it's not bad by todays standards, though I'd expect to see it at a budget price.

Presentation 84%
Nice demo mode and title tune.

Graphics 91%
Excellent and varied backdrops with heaps of sprites.

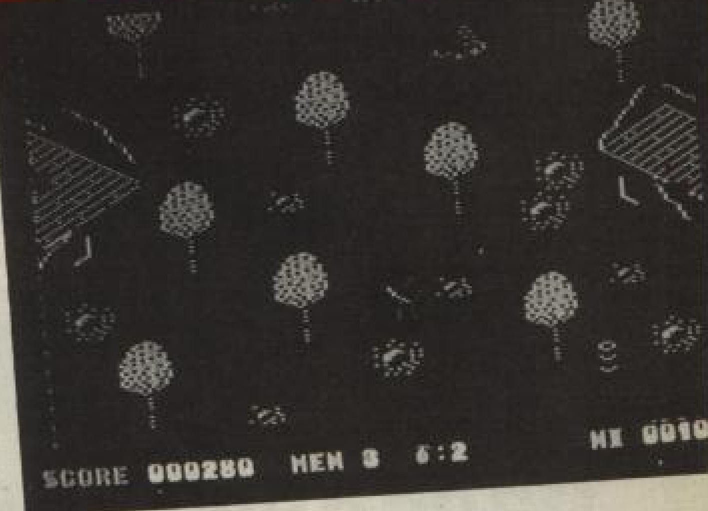
Sound 82%
Great title tune and spot FX.

Hookability 93%
Desire to capture the next post is huge . . .

Lastability 90%
And it's not easy by any means.

Value For Money 92%
Well cheap for a well crucial game.

Overall 90%
One of the best arcade shoot em downs yet.



ELECTROSOUND

Orpheus

The Gold Medal of the month went to this music utility, which allows you to compose music and use it in games or demos. Since *Electrosound* was released, plenty of budding musicians have bought it and used it to good effect. Many CNET users use it to add a little aural interest to their demos and pictures. Julian was the only reviewer who looked at *Electrosound* and it was met with much enthusiasm: 'An absolutely superb utility which is unsurpassed in my eyes (ears). There's massive potential for a professional musician and the most incredible tunes can be easily created'.

The big problem with *Electrosound* is you can't change the preset drumbeats (you can define your own, but it takes up a channel). Consequently, tunes sound rather samey when the preset drumbeat is used. Nevertheless, people like DEMON (CNET) have used *Electrosound* to create some really good tunes, and I still think it's a worthy purchase to anyone who'd like to experiment with the SID chip but hasn't got the technical ability.
JR

I won't comment — I don't consider myself to be a musician.
GP

(Jaz) I think the ratings are fine — there's still nothing to beat it.

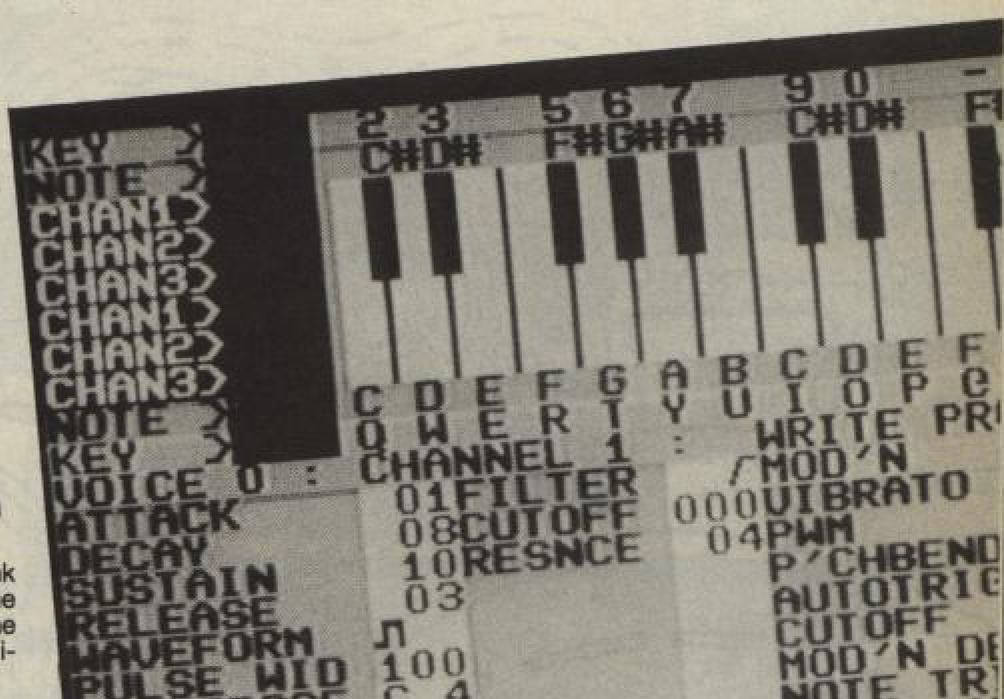
Presentation 82%
Instructions may seem a bit confusing to a novice. Compatible with Commodore *Music Maker* clip-on keyboard.

Ease of Use 93%
Once initial problems are over it's a doddle to use.

Sound Capabilities 99%
Limited only by the user's abilities. Built in voices are excellent, and once users becomes familiar with what they are doing some really professional voices can be made.

Value For Money 98%
Miles better than any music utility in its class and puts the more expensive ones to shame.

Overall 97%
An incredible music utility, reasonably easy to use and most professional in its sound and capabilities.



Presentation 96%
Extremely well thought out and executed program.

Graphics 93%
Excellent definition, animation, use of colour and superb scrolling techniques.

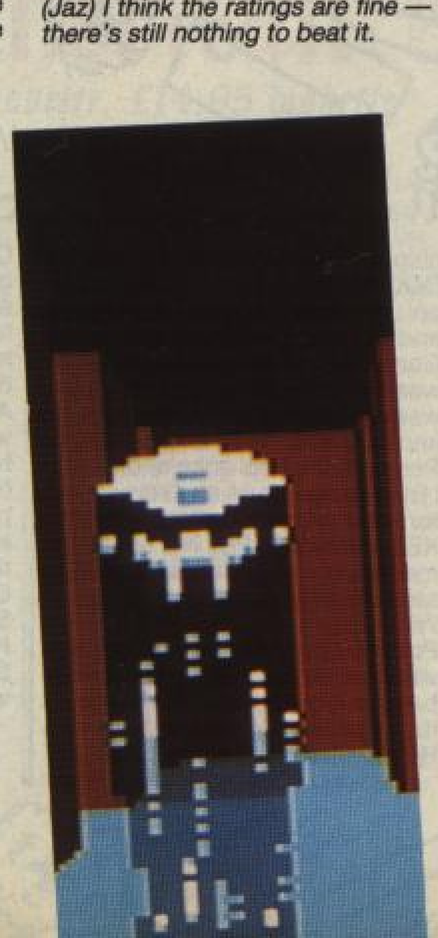
Sound 81%
Very good and unusual Minteresque sound effects.

Hookability 95%
Extremely easy to get into as you can start where you like.

Lastability 94%
Addictive, challenging and above all FUN!

Value For Money 95%
More expensive than previous Minter releases but just as worthy.

Overall 94%
Yet another Minter classic.



BATALYX

Llamasoft/Ariolasoft

After a rather hefty ZZAP!/Minter contretemps, everyone wondered how we would receive Jeff's new game. Naturally, when it came to reviewing *Batalyx* the team bore no malice and judged it on merit alone. 'Nice one Minter . . . it's HYPERBRILL, okay twelve year olds?' joked jovial Julian. Penn the 'traitor' enthused: '*Batalyx* is a perfect example of Jeff Minter at his best' and Liddon thought it was 'one of the star releases of the year'.

This is a great combination of mindless blasting, strategy and out-and-out weirdness. The graphics and sound effects still hold good today — I still think this is one of the best Commodore shoot em ups.
JR

This is without doubt one of the best games Jeffrey has ever written. All five sub-games are very playable, and as a complete package it's worth every penny.
GP

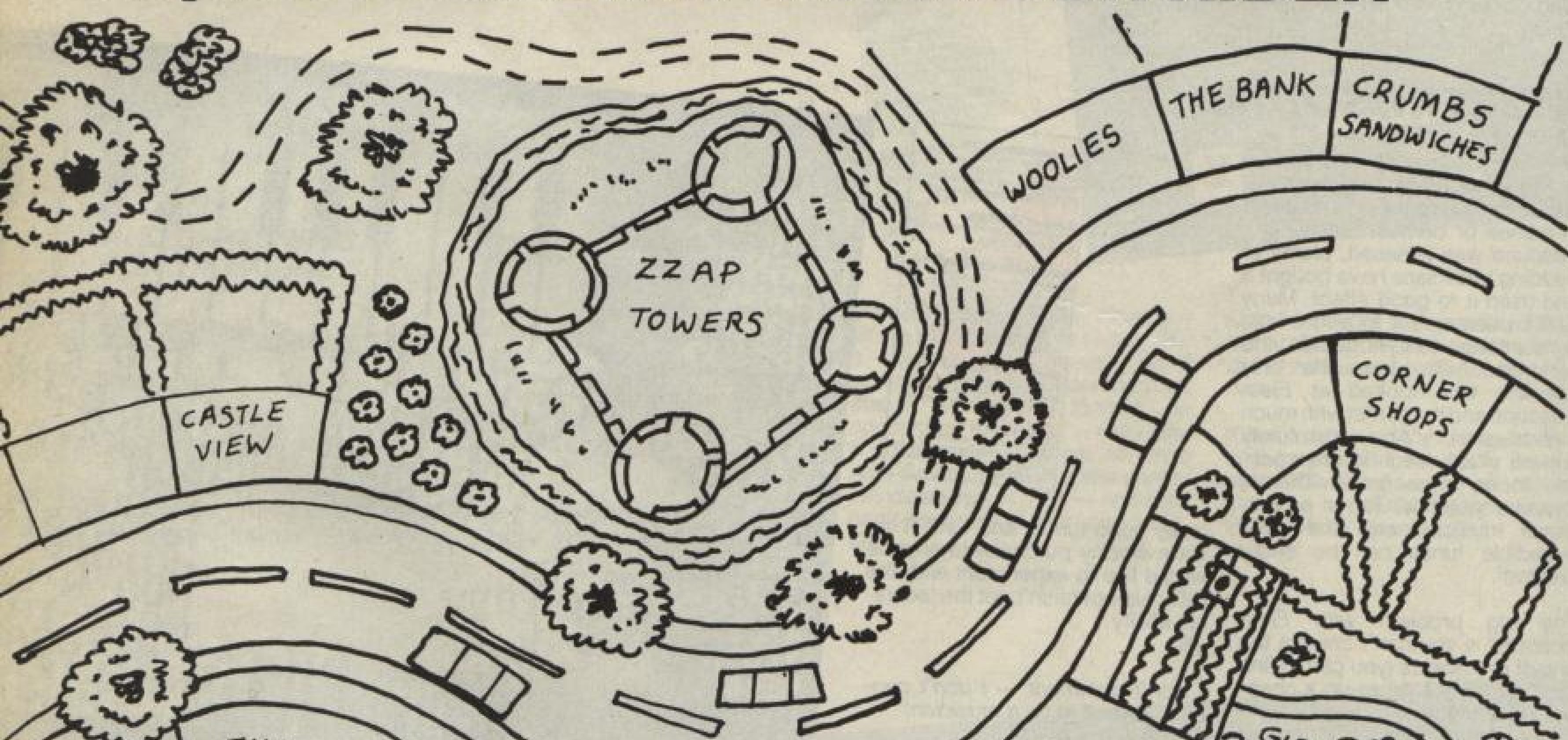
(Jaz) I hate saying 'I think the ratings were fine' 'cos it's boring. But they were, so I must. Ah! Hold on! I think the sound rating should have been a weeny bit higher.

(Gaz) With the exception of sound (which should have been in the high eighties) I reckon the ratings were spot on. I wouldn't rate it much lower if we reviewed it today — it's still a classic creation.

DROP SOMETHING NASTY ON GIRLIE PENN

ZZAP! COMP

Go on a Spiky Head Hunt and WIN one of 50 copies of Quicksilva's GLIDER RIDER



GLIDER RIDER is the name of the game that Quicksilva have just released and appropriately enough, the other day — after a severe telling off by Gary Penn — I sneaked it into my beloved broom cupboard and gave it a go. Cor! What you have to do is zoom around the countryside and try to bomb several nuclear reactors, avoiding the defensive lasers guarding each installation (see the review for more details).

Anyway, come closing up time I had to leave, so I put on my helmet, trundled outside and climbed onto my bike. Off down the high street I went, past ZZAP! Towers, the sandwich shop and the bank, and was just turning left when I spotted Girlie Penn leaving the Bull pub. Imagine my surprise when the bike turned into a microlite just like the one in the game! Har har! Grotty Gazza was in for a surprise too! I decided that with the nine bombs on board, I was going to repay him for all the nasty things he'd said that day. And so I began my Spiky Head Hunt!

Penno saw me hurtling out of the sky just above Woolworth's and BOOM! I missed him but demolished Woolies. (I wonder where Mummy Minion will buy her underwear now?) Gripped by the thought that he'd messed up his hair style, Penn hesitated, so I dropped another bomb — KER-BOOM! No Penn and no ZZAP Towers . . . But there he was, running across the debris and into the chip shop. BOOM! (scamper) BOOM! (scamper) . . . This went on until I only had one bomb left and the up-and-coming Captain Corpulent could run no more. He was hiding and I knew where he was. I started my final bomb run knowing that this time I would end Penn's rude rants once and for all. I lined the glider up and was about to press the fire button when — KERRSCHLAAAPP!! A hand hit me across the head and a voice said 'Whatd'yerthink yer doin'? Where's my bleedin' coffee?' Poooh! Life returned to normal with a start as I realised it had all been a dream. Sob! Just when I had a chance to bomb the Spiky Haired Chump . . .

Anyway, I had a chat with Quicksilva and they said they'd give a copy of GLIDER RIDER to the first fifty people who could help to pulverise Penn. Art lent me a hand too and drew the scene of the final conflict from my dream. All you have to do is to place an 'X' where you think Old Spiky was hiding on my final bomb run. Don't forget, you only get one go because that's all I had. Drop your entries into an envelope and send them off to reach me before 31st December. Address them to **SPIKY HEAD HUNT, ZZAP! Ruins, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB**. And the very best of luck — tee hee.

A complete monthly guide by the infamous White Wizard for all 64 owners who prefer games involving typed commands rather than wiggled joysticks.

ZZAP! adventure



Somewhere in Borphee lies a weary Wizard. Weary, washed-out, and wearing a brass bikini. Find out the Hideous Truth in this month's epistle from the Bearded One, and while you're about it — check up on Bugsy **from St Brides, try for the** Inheritance **from Infogrames, go on the air with** The Archers, **and last — but not least — say KWAH and see what happens in the second episode of Melbourne House's** Redhawk **series.**

The Inheritance

Infogrames, £9.95 cassette, £14.95 diskette



David Crossweller of Infogrames sent me *Mandragore* and I didn't really like it much. Now he's sent me *The Inheritance* and, well, I'm afraid I don't like it much.

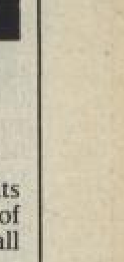
To be fair, however, I'm not sure I ought to review it anyway since it isn't, in my opinion, an adventure at all. The idea is quite novel — what you get is a detailed picture of your location and a cursor. By moving the cursor and pressing SPACE you can examine objects or pick them up, or (once you've got them and they're displayed in your inventory) use them. Apart from the location and the icons representing the objects you're carrying, however, the screen seems rather bare and under-designed.

The plot involves you travelling from your bedsit to Las Vegas, there to win a fortune in the casinos and thereby inherit an even larger fortune from your dead auntie. The game loads in three parts — In the Block of Flats, At the Airport, and In Las Vegas. You can only load the latter two parts if you've cracked the earlier ones and noted the password.

I'm not going to spend much time on this one because it really isn't an adventure. There is no text entry and not an awful lot of text appears on-screen. Characters, some quite amusingly drawn, flash up before you and deliver one-line messages in rather terse and sometimes rather stilted English. These sequences take rather longer than is necessary and hold up the action, which is crucial because in every section you're up against the clock.

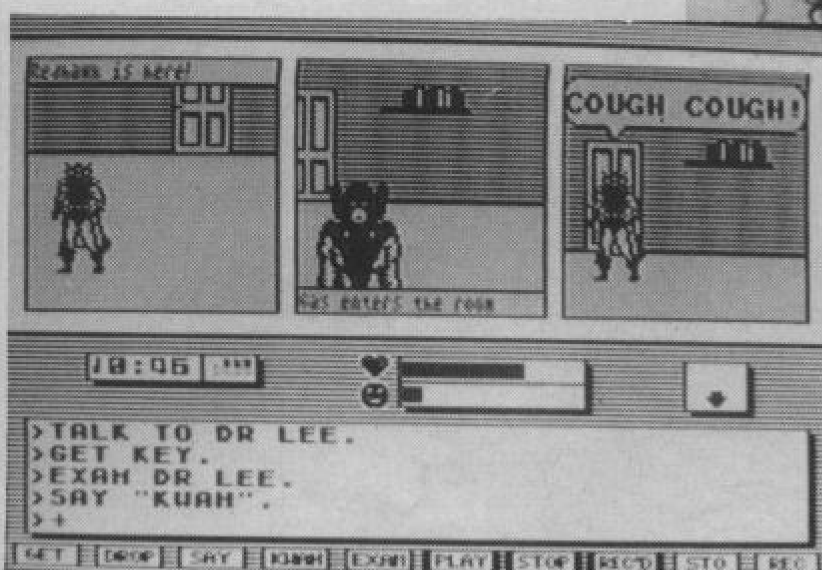
The best thing about *The Inheritance* is the way you can move the cursor around the screen picking on things you'd like to get or examine. That makes it feel rather life-like, with the cursor becoming your roving eye and the space bar your outstretched hand. Like *Kwah!!*, this system perhaps has possibilities but I didn't feel that this game really exploited them to the full. The whole of the first section, for example, relies almost entirely on just one idea — finding objects to hand to your co-tenants so that they will allow you out of the building. After a while it all gets a bit boring.

But then many very popular arcade games are based on just one idea, so perhaps I really shouldn't be reviewing this one. Ratings, I think, are out of place therefore — but if I was going to rate it as an adventure it wouldn't get more than 58% overall and well below that for atmosphere and interaction.



Kwah!!

Melbourne House, £9.95 cassette





Remember *Redhawk*? The game that other magazines thought was whizzo, but the Wiz thought was a load of rubbish? Well now the sideways scrolling comic-strip format with text-entry is with us again. Is it any better, or is it still nought but a turkey?

It's definitely a lot better, thank goodness. I actually began to get quite involved in this program, in which hero Kevin tries to discover something of his past and bring an evil doctor to justice in the process.

The real improvements in the game are: first, quicker drawing of graphics and improved detail and quality of the pictures; second, a far better game-structure with a well-designed map and more logical puzzles; third, clearer objectives in a plot unmuddled by petty thugs, arrests, and a rather silly reliance on super-powers. These were all things that I felt made the original *Redhawk* game a mess, and in this follow-up they're all much improved.

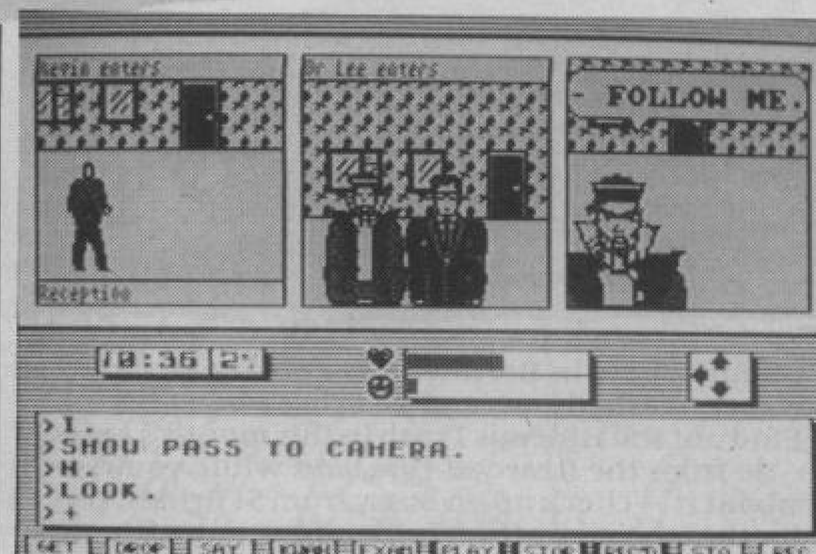
In fact, if only the programming team can clear up the one major flaw (see below) in this system, they might actually be on to something quite good. Just to remind you — or inform you, if you haven't seen *Redhawk* — the screen is divided into two, with the upper half boasting three panels which carry three pictures as in a strip cartoon.

The pictures show you the current location and characters — and as you enter commands in the text window below they flip along from right to left, bringing in new pictures from the right as if you were reading a comic book. Because of the constraints of a 6502 processor the effect is still rather clumsy, but it's now been speeded up to the point where it does actually enhance the game rather than make it look simply amateurish.

Nice touches include the fact that if you type something like 'SAY KWAH' then the character Kevin (whom you control) sprouts a speech bubble in true comic-strip form in which the word is appears. If your message can't fit in all at once, it scrolls through the bubble.

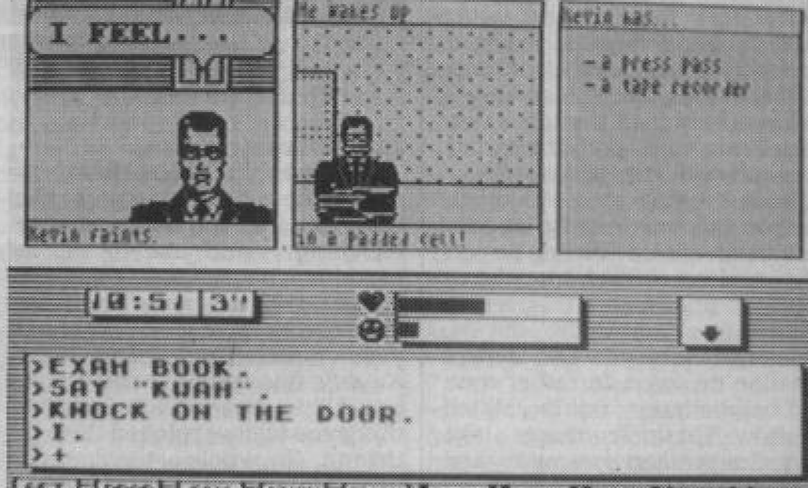
As far as the plot is concerned, Kevin — as in the previous game — can change into his super alter-ego by simply saying 'KWAH'. Rather better use of this is made in this program than in the original. For example, there's one point where young Kev is bound and gagged and therefore can't say anything except MMMGGGGPHHH . . . or words to that effect. If the original game had had puzzles of that quality in it I wouldn't have slated it so badly.

However there remains a bug in the lettuce. The parser is frankly awful. As always in these games, where you try to fit graphics, on-screen clocks, and other innovations into the program all at once, something has to give. And in *Kwah!!* it's the part of the program that understands what you're typing in. You can only move in four directions, the vocabulary is very small, and the system is full of inconsistencies. For example, you type 'PULL LEVER' in a room where there isn't a lever. The program responds: 'Do what with the lever?'. If you persevere it will eventually, after wasting your time, admit that there 'isn't one here.'



Worse, apart from the small vocab, is the way the parser leads you into thinking it can understand more than it can. You find 'A small gap' in a door. You type 'LOOK THROUGH GAP' . . . 'Look through what gap?' the program replies. 'LOOK THROUGH THE SMALL GAP?' you enter. ''Small' confuses Kevin' replies the infuriating parser.

And so on. Perhaps the system is really stretching the C64 to its limits, or perhaps the programmers haven't got into their stride yet. Which of these two theories is true will decide whether this system has an interesting future or whether *Kwah!!* will be remembered as the best it ever had to offer. As it is, I reckon it's only just worth the asking price, but if you get it for a present I think you'll find it worth having a crack at.



Atmosphere	55%
Interaction	50%
Lasting Interest	60%
Value For Money	55%
Overall	**60%**

The Archers

Mosaic/Level 9, £9.95 cassette



Level 9 must have spent quite a lot of time developing their scrolling-text-cum-multiple-choice-plot-alternatives system which they first used in *Adrian Mole*. Either that, or Mosaic must have made a lot of money out of selling the *Mole* game, because here we have another in the same vein.

The Archers uses the exactly the same system as *Adrian Mole*. As in Level 9's other games, text prints on the bottom of the screen scrolling upward, while 'multi-tasking' pictures draw simultaneously on the top half.

Also, as with Level 9's other games, the pics aren't really that brilliant. Others may disagree but I'm afraid that I still don't go for Level 9's graphics. I know they have problems with memory space, but I'm sure fewer pics and higher quality plus attention to detail would be more welcome to most players.

However, UNLIKE Level 9's other games, in *The Archers* you do NOT get to enter any text. Instead, the story scrolls up the page and every so often you get a choice of three alternative courses of action for the character being controlled. Selecting different choices has different results.

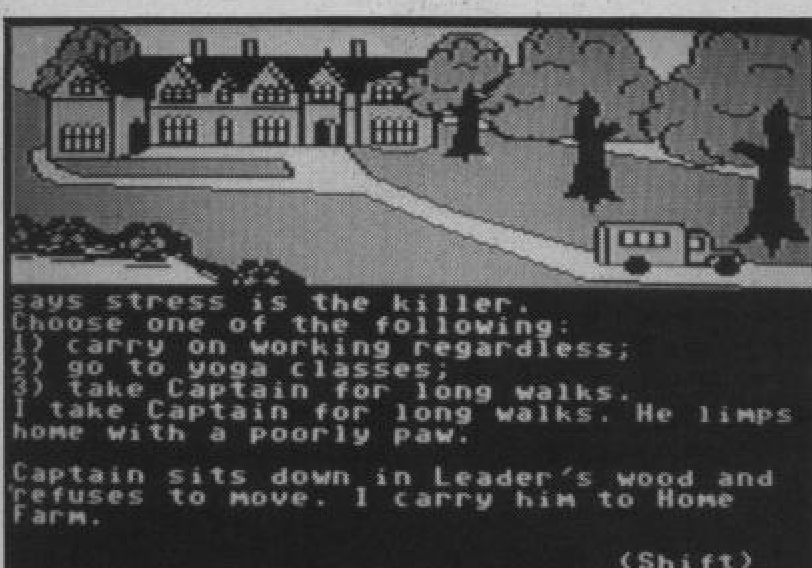
In *The Archers*, the different results — apart from what actually happens in the story — are either a drop in the number of listeners (if things get too boring) or an angry letter from the BBC authorities (if things get too hot). In other words, you take the role of program producer/story editor and have to carry the can if things go wrong. If they go badly wrong you get the sack and start again.

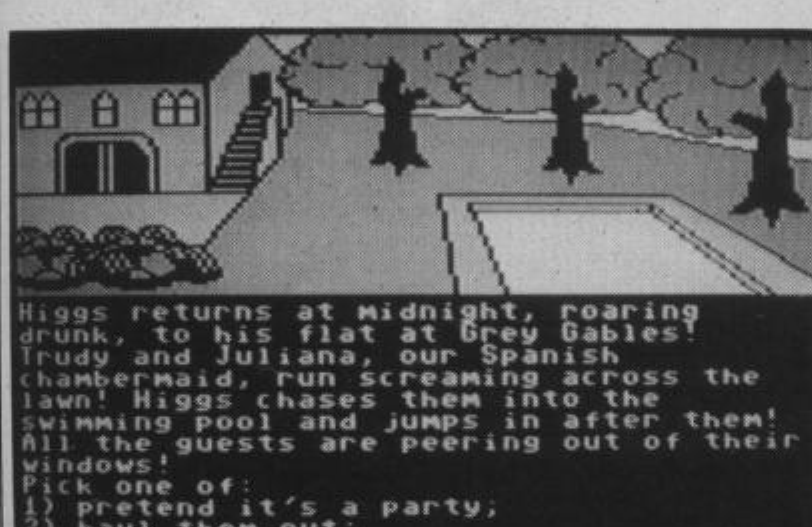
The program is divided into four parts, and each part requires that you make decisions for one of the major characters in the series. These are Jack Woolley, Eddie Grundy, Elizabeth Archer, and Nelson Gabriel. In the interests of equality it would have been nice to have had two female characters — especially since in my view the Elizabeth section is one of the strongest. Perhaps designer/writer Pete Austin felt nervous about writing about ladies.

The good news, comparing this program to *Adrian Mole*, is that there are far more frequent decisions to be made and therefore more variety in the game. Furthermore, the game is not much affected by whether or not you listen regularly to *The Archers* program. With *Adrian Mole* I felt that having read the books put me at a slight advantage which in turn made the game less interesting. Not the case here. And if you're totally unfamiliar with the radio program there are extensive notes on the different characters on the cassette cover.

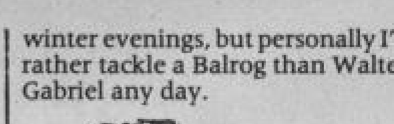
The bad news, frankly, is that I found the game rather boring and certainly not worth the asking price. The sense of humour that I found so attractive in *Mole* reoccurs in this program but seems somehow rather strained. The growing pains of adolescence that characterised the earlier program seem to be replaced by moral and political considerations here, but the issues seem somehow naive. Altogether, I felt, a bit of a disappointment.

But then the Wiz is a dyed-in-the-wool adventurer and not an Archers' fan. I think that families who listen to the radio program might really get a kick out of playing this game together in the long winter evenings, but personally I'd rather tackle a Balrog than Walter Gabriel any day.









Atmosphere	50%
Interaction	N/A
Lasting Interest	40%
Value For Money	50%
Overall	**50%**

PREVIEW

Bugsy

St Brides/CRL

Bugsy is a big bad blue rabbit who brazens his way round Chicago trying to take over control from the mobs. He has a good line in Mickey Spillane-type prose, as in 'The kids round here are so tough that when they can't find any wood they whittle their fingers' and he is the main character in this latest Quill-ustrated effort from Priscilla Langridge and her team in Ireland.

St Brides and the Quill have together produced some rather original titles during their association. *The Secret of St Brides* was quite novel as you wrestled with time-distortion and mesmerism in St Brides School. *The Snow Queen* was a wonderfully romantic idea that, in my view, should never have been released as a commercial proposition but was still rather 'nice' in a quaint way.

The Very Big Cave Adventure, however, showed a developing sense of what was commercially, rather than artistically, desirable and finally *Bugsy* makes an even better bid for mass sales, featuring guns, gangsters, and a lot of good ol' murder and mayhem.

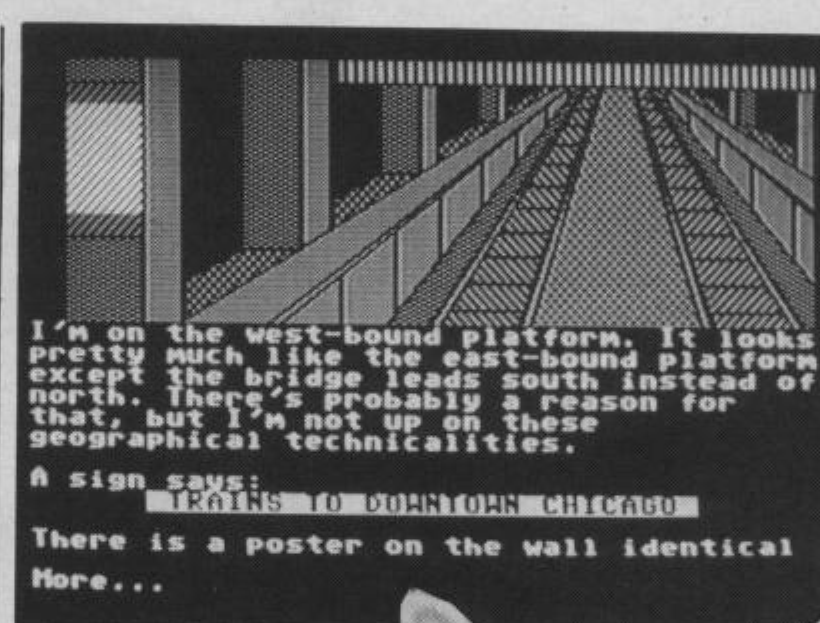
With its Philip Marlow/US Gangster images, the result might have been something like that excellent game *Borrowed Time* from Activision, were it not for the fact that (a) the hero is a rabbit and (b) the shortcomings of the Quill system. The first point injects a reasonable amount of humour into the project, the second robs it of any chance to shine technically or to compete with more state-of-the-art adventures that have powerful parsers and gi-normous vocabularies.

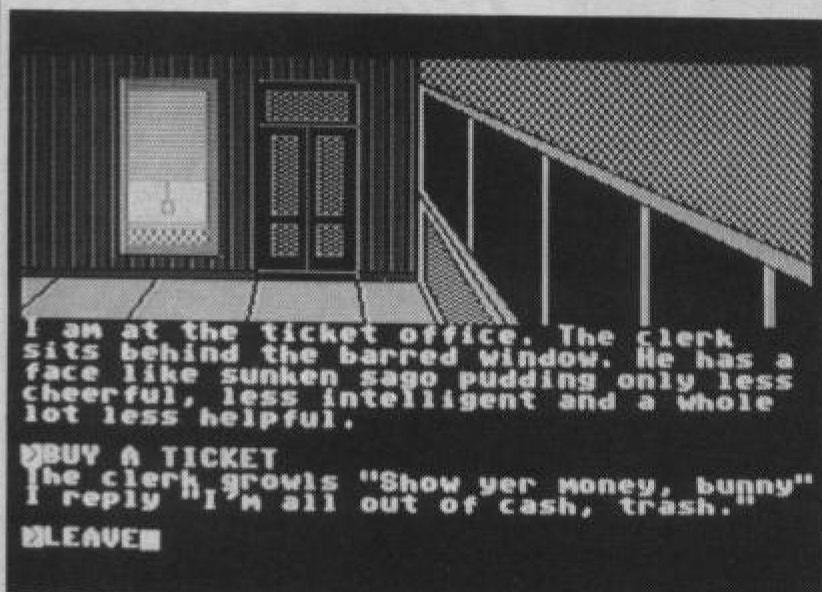
The fact is that St Brides now have the design ideas to produce some really good games, but the Quill isn't able to provide a powerful enough framework for those ideas. The standardised display, poor parser, small space for vocabulary, and lack of true interactive character handling all limit a good game.

There was a time when I praised the Quill for bringing out the adventurer in us all. It was indeed an excellent tool for bringing adventuring to the masses, and it will remain an excellent tool for home use. But commercially, I feel, the tide has turned and from now on I reckon that this traditional adventure style is stifling us writers, not supporting us.

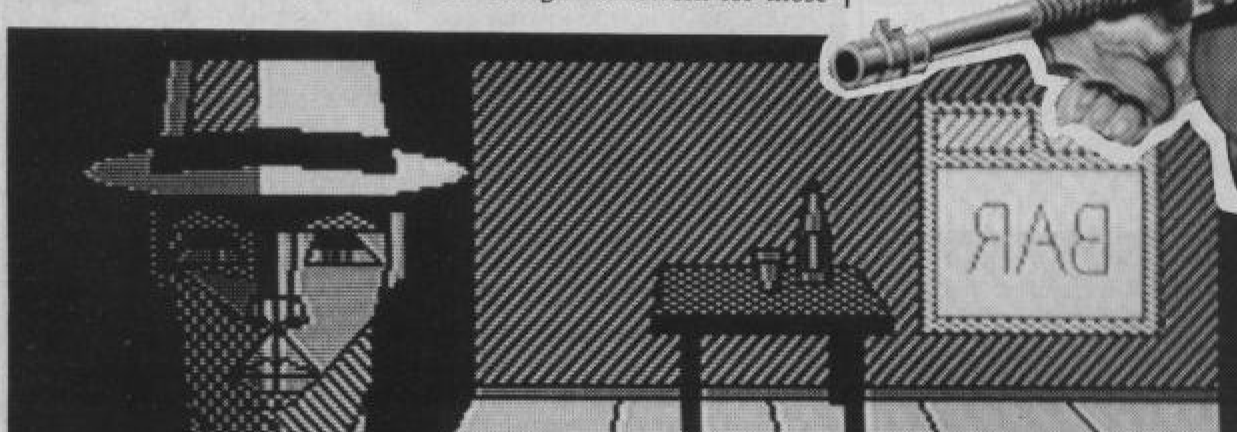
Since I only got a demo of *Bugsy* I can't really give you a full review. The descriptions are amusing, the plot twists that I saw original, and the game idea well-worn but still quite exciting. But after playing games like *Borrowed Time* and *Leather Goddesses* I felt that I had been thrown back two years. The pictures are pretty but they don't draw instantly, the screen format is sufficient but not excitingly different, the parser is highly competent but not stunning. The game, in other words, although brand new, is looking as old as the system that was used to write it.

St Brides should either get themselves a professional programming team to devise a system that can do justice to their originality, or be resigned to dwindling sales and popularity in the face of newer, more powerful programs. Meanwhile if *Bugsy* goes far it will be on the strength of CRL's marketing, and not much else.












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Leather Goddesses of Phobos

Infocom/Activision, £24.95 disk only

A well-known magazine publisher recently appeared via holographic transmission in the White Wizard's cave to ask his opinion about *Leather Goddesses of Phobos*, the latest release from the almost Divine Infocom company of *Hitch-Hikers*, *Sorcerer*, and *Zork fame*.

What did I think, he timidly enquired, of this game? Had I actually discovered any . . . RUDE . . . bits?? What had I done with the Female Gorilla? Finally, and most significantly, he asked whether I thought the game was any good.

That's significant because people don't often wonder whether Infocom games are any good or not. They just wonder whether to give them 95% or 96% and try to decide which superlative adjective to use — 'Brilliant' 'Astounding' or perhaps 'Scrotnig' if they read 2000AD. The fact is that there is rarely any doubt about an Infocom title, but in this case doubt emerged so the Wiz rushed out, bought a copy, and loaded it up. The privileged reader of this Zarjaz Mag will now hear the Wise One's opinion . . .

The game is Brilliant, Astounding, and Scrotnig.

Here's what it's all about. You — and you can be male or female in this game, thank goodness, so for once the Wiz can address the whole population of the UK and not just the men, as is unfortunately the usual case with UK adventures — have been captured by the *Leather Goddesses of Phobos* who invite you to take part in their scientific research program.

If you've ever seen pictures of those unfortunate monkeys in labs with horrible looking tubes coming out of their ears then you might get some idea of what the Leather Ones have got in store for you, except that the tubes come out of certain other places that we shall not mention and the game, mercifully, only hints at. Obviously, therefore, the aim of the game is to manfully (or womanfully) resist the temptation to join in the fun and escape, saving the rest of mankind in the process.

The game has you and your companion (a fellow escaped prisoner) zipping about the universe, by means of some very convenient black holes (which are just painted on the ground), collecting objects and trying not to get killed or otherwise inconvenienced.

The ease with which one can



The Plot . . .

The combination of an experienced and highly skilled game designer like Steve Meretsky plus a rather risque scenario makes for a game with a number of unusual twists, but at heart *LGOP* is just another excellent adventure in the traditional Infocom mode.

You must locate eight different objects in the game and these are:

1. A common household blender
2. Six feet of rubber hose
3. A pair of cotton balls
4. An 82 degree angle
5. A headlight from any 1933 Ford
6. A mouse
7. Any size photo of Douglas Fairbanks
8. A copy of the Cleveland Phone book

Locating these objects isn't that difficult, but like in the Scott Adams games, actually getting them into your possession is extremely tricky. And then, perhaps they aren't going to do you any good after all! Would YOU believe a moronic keep-fit maniac who handed you a matchbox with those items scribbled on it, announcing that with that equipment he/she could save the world??

The Sex . . .

Okay, so some of the passages in this game are just a tiny bit naughty. But that really is as far as it goes and there's nothing here that would shock my grandmother. Whether that's a relief or a disappointment to you depends on what sort of person you are.

The three levels of play, Tame, Suggestive, and Lewd have a two main effects on the game. The first is in what the program will print out on the screen. TAME gets you briefer descriptions and nothing that could possibly be construed as rude (unless you've got a dirty mind). SUGGESTIVE is practically the same as LEWD but hesitates a bit over the more intimate details.

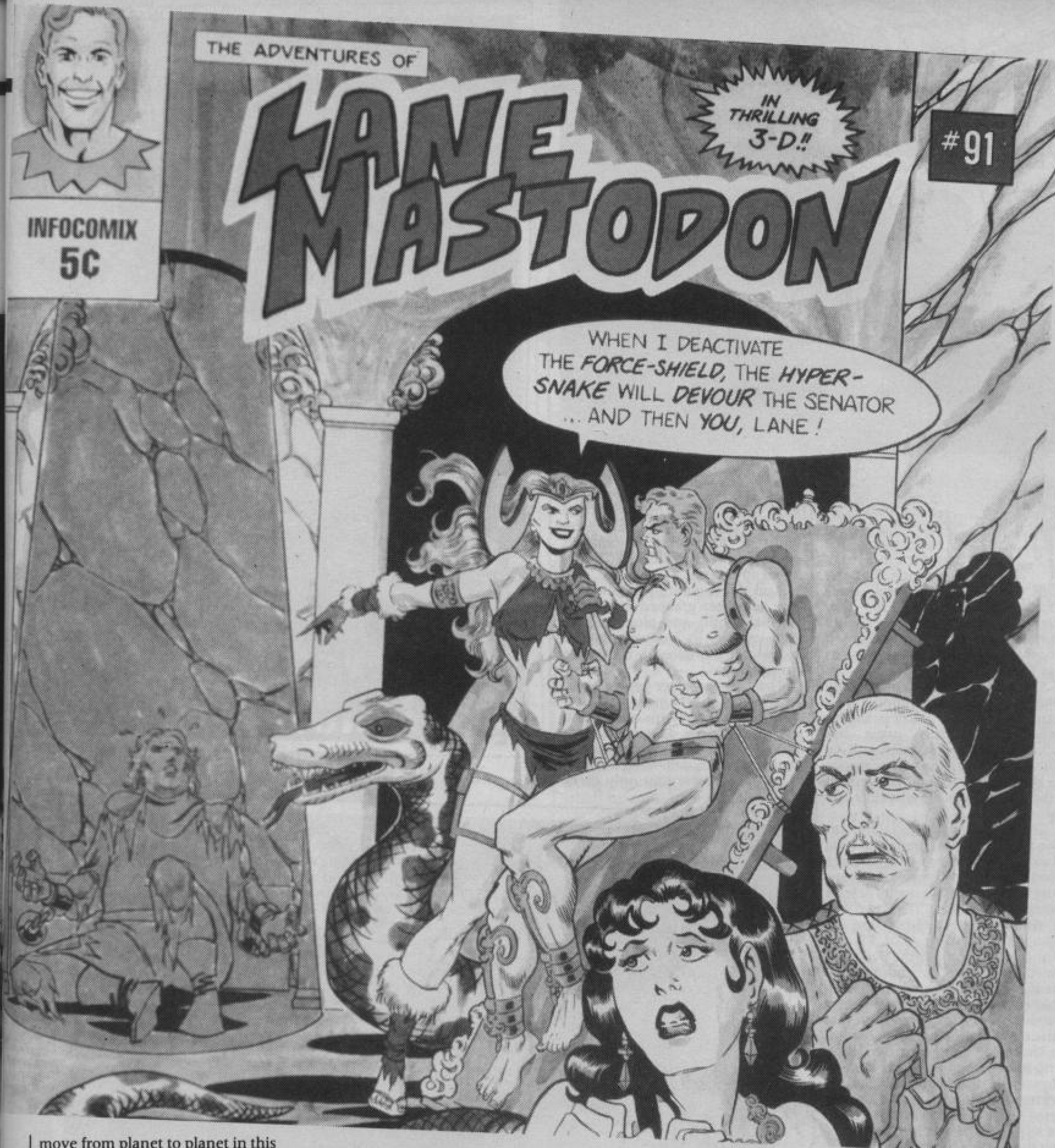
LEWD gives you the full treatment (which isn't, in fact that much) and often offers rather lengthier descriptions. For this reason, even if you're a Vicar, I'd recommend playing in Lewd mode all the time.

However, the second main effect on gameplay that changing levels has is to increase the vocabulary accepted by the parser. In TAME mode certain words will simply not be understood. In LEWD, they almost certainly will be, though whether entering these (unspecified, in this family magazine) commands will get you much excitement is open to debate.

Hand-in-hand with this last point goes the fact that LEWD will also change the INTERPRETATION of certain words. For example, if you EAT an apple in TAME mode, no problem. However, if you EAT an apple in LEWD mode, I would advise you to check that it is over sixteen first.

The blurb at the beginning of the game suggests that the program may raise some reaction from the Moral Majority. Frankly, I think that that is highly unlikely. Quite apart from the fact that I can't see what's wrong with a bit of healthy sex in a game anyway. As it is, everything in this game's healthy, and there isn't any real sexual activity to disturb the under-aged. Buy with confidence, parents.

'SOUNDS NAUGHTY...'



move from planet to planet in this fashion certainly makes for plenty of variety in the landscape but in fact the Wiz found this the weakest aspect of the game. I like adventures that stick to one geographical location and then go into it in great detail, thereby helping to generate a compulsive and vivid 'sense of being-there'. Not that the *LGOP* locations aren't vividly described — I just found that being on Mars one moment and a billion light-years away the next rather unsettling. I'm sure that one of the strengths of games like *Colossal Cave* and the *Price of Magik* is their concentration on one overall geographical framework with many parts, rather than many frameworks with fewer locations in each one.

Of course the parser on *LGOP* is up to Infocom standard with all the trimmings, including OOPS and complex input parsing. No-one has yet matched this parsing system — I'm afraid it's still light-years ahead of our own attempts in the UK, with the possible exception of *The Pawn*. You won't have much trouble making yourself understood in this game, that's for sure.

I think what the Wizard found most impressive about *Leather Goddesses* was that the author has not allowed the temptation of being simply rude or risque to weaken the structure of the game itself. The puzzles are every bit as good as one would expect and there's enough logical gameplay here to keep you busy enough to justify the usual high Infocom price tag.

The Humour . . .

There is a lot of humour in this game — inevitably since Mr Meretsky, author of *Sorcerer* and *Hitch-Hikers*, is a man game for a laugh. I'm glad to say that much of the humour does NOT rely on dirty jokes or innuendos (although some of these, in LEWD mode are very funny). For example, what other game would give you this variety of responses:

It's a good likeness of a pussy, but is it art?
Yes
That was just a rhetorical question.
No
You sound rather negative.
Who am I?
Good question.
Where is the toilet?
Beats me.
Lie down.
Why bother?
Remove bikini
But the brass bikini is so becoming!
Or this really absurd response:
Tie the hose to the switch
You've tied the rubber hose! In the third quarter, with 40 seconds on the clock, the score is rubber hose 17, player 17!!! But seriously, folks, you can't tie the rubber hose.

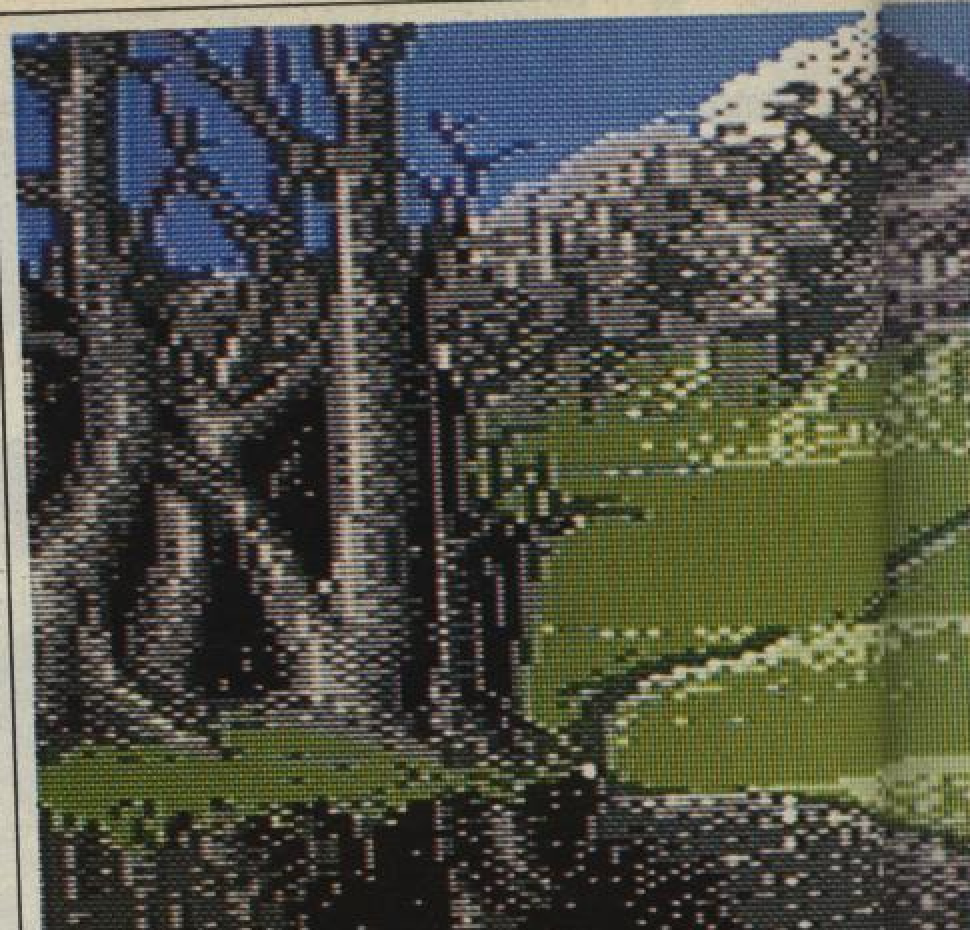
And if you tire of the responses, you'll still find that the continual tongue-in-cheek humour of the location descriptions keeps you on the ball. One of the Wiz's favourite bits is when:
'. . . You feel uneasy as the Mad Scientist locks the door behind you and dissolves the key in a vat of acid.'
I'll say you do!!

Atmosphere	89%
Interaction	94%
Lasting Interest	93%
Value For Money	89%
Overall	**91%**

ZZAP! adventure

The Pawn

Rainbird (Magnetic Scrolls), £19.95 disk only



Infocom have been the undisputed leaders of disk based adventures for some time, so it's strange that the first real challenge to that company's dominance should come from a previously unknown company called Magnetic Scrolls, via Rainbird.

Those of you who keep a beady eye on the general computer press can already bear witness to the great success this game has achieved on 16 bit micros. Now *The Pawn* has made a reappearance in the form of an 8 bit conversion you can see just how well it has been done.

The name most associated with the game is Anita Sinclair, a long time fan of Infocom who said she would only ever write an adventure if she thought it was of at least comparable quality. The Pawn was a result of her efforts and its appearance on the Atari ST and Amiga created a storm. Even the American market, notoriously hard to break into and spoiled by the easy availability of Infocom products was impressed by this first effort from Magnetic Scrolls.

The game comes on two disks and is described as a text adventure with some graphics as an 'extra'. This is what is known as a gross understatement. The thirty or so graphic screens accompanying the game were drawn by artist extraordinaire, Bob Stevenson and are the best ever to appear on a game of this type. The full screen graphics 'drop down' over the text and succeed in adding to the atmosphere, despite slowing the game down somewhat with each disk access. Should this prove annoying, though, the pictures can be turned off or put into a rather clever 'brief' mode where they appear as miniature 'cameos' in the top right hand corner of the screen.

It may be however, that you spend a couple of hours with the packaging before you even bother to boot up the game. The whole thing comes in a deep, glossy A5 box complete with a novella, cypheric clues, a gameplay guide, Commodore version guide, a poster and the two game disks. The production value of the whole package is extremely high. The novella is a lot of fun to read as well, dealing as it does with the nefarious antics of members of the court of Kerovnia and various characters with political and personal ambitions . . .

And this is where you come in. You have been grabbed out of your normal world and plunged into Kerovnia in its time of deepest trouble. From here on in, you're on your own.

The first character you're likely to meet is the banished wizard, Kronos. He gives you a note and asks for it to be delivered to the king. This seems to be the quest at first, but in fact, delivering the note is an easy matter that only earns you a handful of points. After that, you're free to wander around and decide what you're going to do.

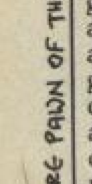


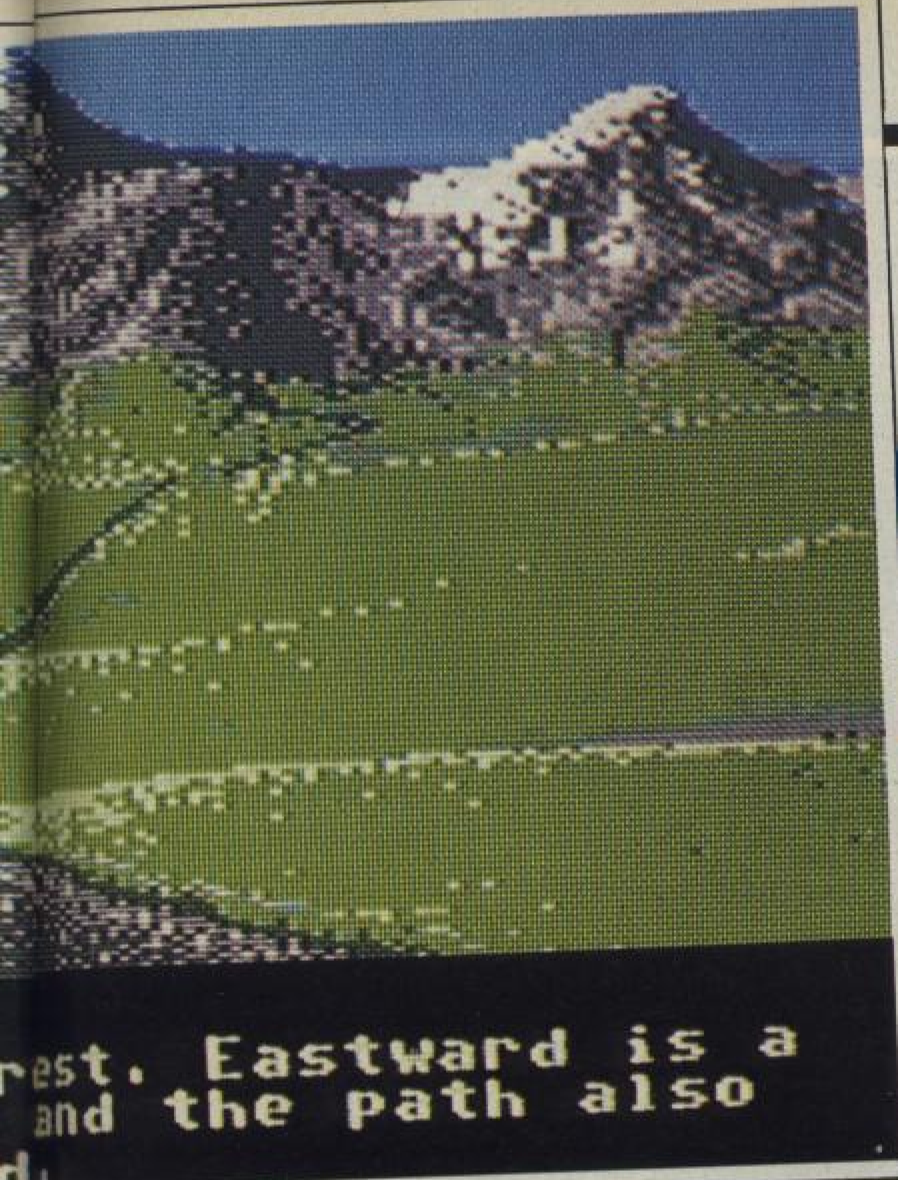
Just to prove we actually played it . . . you can't simply wander into stunning scenes like this you know! Takes a bit of work with the old grey stuff . . .

During your travels, you will meet a variety of strange people and circumstances, like the adventurer who rides a legless horse; Honest John the trader, who is extremely difficult to deal with; the sad, uncommunicative snowman who guards the entrance to the ice tower, and the mysterious guru of the hills. Interaction with all of these characters is refreshingly detailed but will often cause headaches when trying to figure out their cryptic clues. I would avoid combat with them as well. They're all pretty tough.

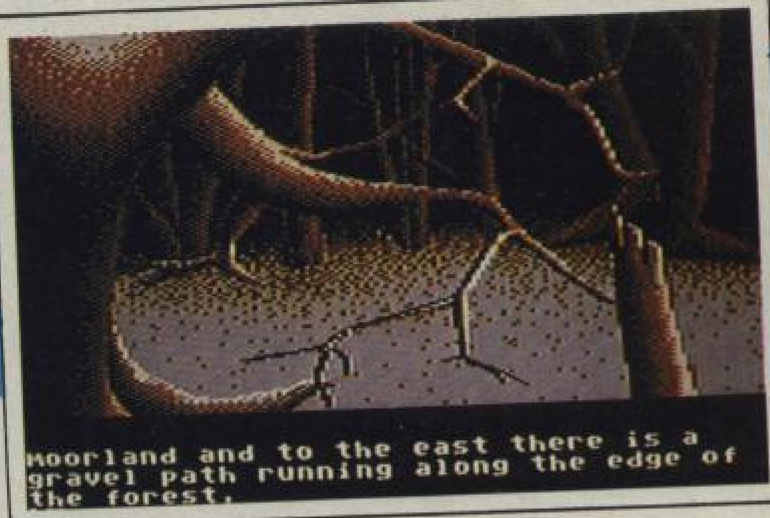
While you're wandering around, you may occasionally notice a dotted red line across the ground. There is also a series of accompanying notice boards explaining that this marks the edge of the adventure and that no objects may be taken beyond the line. Your character has a metal wristband which, apparently, cannot be removed. As it is an object, you are kept within the realms of Kerovnia. A nice touch.

Despite the presence of several high quality graphic screen, the





After having unwittingly become the game's central character, this is the first view to greet your eyes. Green and pleasant pastures meet Kilimanjaro.



Eerie forests have been the hallmark of many a great adventure. This one hides more than one secret behind the bark . . .

location descriptions are exquisitely written and are on a par with many Infocom and Level 9 games, in fact they are markedly superior in some cases. The parser too, allows horrendously complex constructions to be created by the player and the resulting freedom of expression can try the game to its limits. Responses are often tongue in cheek but usually well thought out, and the vocabulary is absolutely huge.

A wax dummy like me rarely gets the chance to give a game a Gold Medal and I was sorely tempted to do so with *The Pawn*. Discretion prevailed however, as even a wonderous work such as this can be flawed. And indeed it is. In certain locations, it's possible to move in a theoretically impossible loop. In one case, I tried to move up whilst inside a room, was greeted with the same piece of text I'd had when approaching the location and told that I was outside the room. Another time, a similar occurance happened on a mountain side. Most confusing. Also, some of the coded clues were physically too long for the input buffer, resulting in one frustrated wax dummy pulling at his wick!

One of the best features of the game is the hint section. At the back of the novella there is a series of puzzles with coded replies. Typing 'HINT' earns a response asking for the particular code from the book. These codes are horrendously long and yet when typed, often turn out to be no more than cryptic nudges in the right direction. Worse still, a response may read: 'You need more points to find that out' — after you have spent five minutes carefully inputting codes! Well, I guess it serves you right for trying to cheat!

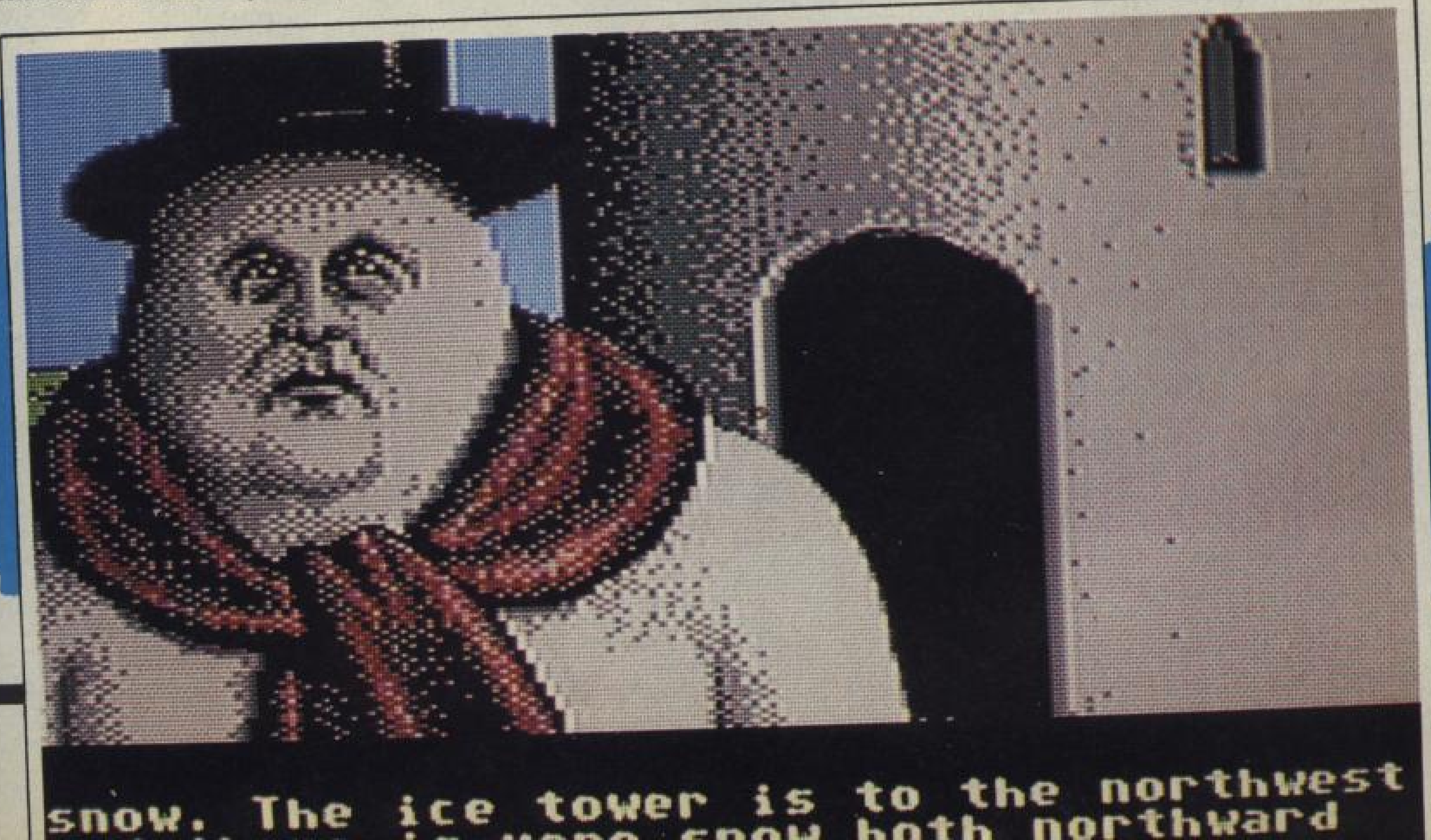
The game also earns a plus point from its protection routine. The game can actually be copied if the right instructions are followed but on restoring a saved game, the computer puts you to a little test that relies on the existence of the novella to ensure that you have a bona fide copy of the game. Three chances are given before something very nasty happens . . .

What is difficult to remember is that this is the first game from a new company. In parts it is a little inconsistent, in others, minor bugs may be lurking, waiting to pester you. The game will be remembered as a classic, despite its faults. And rightly so. *The Pawn* is one of the best graphic adventures this year and will keep you hunched over your beloved keyboards for ages. Don't miss it.

SEAN MASTERSON

Atmosphere	94%
Interaction	96%
Lasting Interest	97%
Value For Money	94%
Overall	**95%**

. . . and look what's waiting at the top. There's more to this snowman than meets the eye.



Wizard's Mailbag

'Do you actually play adventures after you have reviewed them? What adventures have you solved, and how many?' These questions about the White Wizard's private life and prowess come from **Graham Perks**, who also demonstrates in his letter a disturbing knowledge of who the Wiz really is. Quiet, Graham! You've no idea how embarrassed I'd be if everyone knew I was only three feet tall, had no hair, and had to get the writer of this column to help me out every month!

As for the questions. Yes, I do play adventures after I've reviewed them, though to be honest not very many. And I personally have not solved very many adventures either. The reason for this is simple. No sooner than I get my hand on a game, hundreds of letters pour through the letter-box telling me how to finish it! And when you get adventures being sent to you all the time, no sooner have you finished playing one than another claims your attention.

However, I still play *Sorcerer* from Infocom, and I think I'll be playing *Leather Goddesses* for a while. I quite enjoy playing Level 9 games from time to time as well — but unless I've got them on disk I tend not to bother because of the loading time.

The one game I play with as great enjoyment as I did when I first saw it is *Suspect* from Infocom. This is STILL my favourite game and I first played it over two years ago. The trouble for most people is that it is rather difficult to get in this country. **Alec Fu** writes in asking where he can get it and the sad truth is that I don't know! My copy came from Softsel and only runs on the Apple — I also had an IBM version but someone pinched it. If anyone knows how I can get my hands on another copy — short of ordering it direct from Infocom in the states — I'd like to know and will pass it on to readers of this column.

Meanwhile an interesting — possibly even a rather shameful — note from **David** in Warley. *'Thanks for including me in the Contacts column. A lot of interesting people have been in touch with me over various problems and several of us have become friends over the weeks. I've been involved in quite a few long chats with fellow adventurers up and down the country. I've even had phone calls from Australia, Germany, and Norway. The comradeship makes it all worthwhile.*

'One point that has become obvious to me over the past weeks however, is the amount of people who don't seem to want to think the adventure through for themselves. Quite frequently I've been asked for complete solutions or even a phone call ten minutes later asking what to do next. It isn't unusual to receive phone calls from the same person sometimes as often as six times in an afternoon.

'Often the problem faced is very easy. The caller will then go on to tell me how many games he or she has solved. Is this a problem with other contacts or is it just me? What is the point of buying a game without at least trying to do it?

'Anyway, apart from that gripe, I am enjoying the contact with fellow adventurers, so I've sent an updated list in. If anyone has a modem and they want to get in touch over any adventure problem, they can MBX me on DJS8. Keep up the good work.'

Thanks for that last exhortation, David. As for the other points you've made, well — I don't know what to think. It does sound rather depressing. I'd be interested to hear from other people what they think about the matter. Should we persevere on our own? Is it cowardly to cry for help? And just what are the qualities we expect in an adventurer? Let me know.

Finally, a quick cry for help from **Robert Newell**. *'Any information on* William Wobbler, *a graphic adventure game that came with my C64, would be most appreciated.'* Hmmm . . . I've never heard of it. Other readers please enlighten me on this one, and I'll see what I can do. In the meantime, please remember everyone that the Wiz is NOT a personal helpline. Believe me, if I could answer all your letters I would, but I'm only dwarfish and getting this column written every month is quite enough for my aching fingers. Remember — if you're in trouble, try the Clever Contacts.

Farewell until next month, and watch out for the Warlocks.

Wizard Tips

Here's a selection of tips for this month. The Wiz would like to announce that the whole Tips Section is to be thoroughly overhauled, expanded, and redesigned in future issues. If you have any suggestions as to what you would like to see, drop me a line c/o ZZAP! and I'll listen most attentively.

Zzzzz . . .
Ring bike bell outside igloo, then give bike to sandman
Thumb up for a lift at the road

Kentilla
Examine dungeon for wax

The Very Big Cave Adventure
Open drawer for Red Key
The Red Pillar is the only exit to part two
Drop log to cross chasm

Worm in Paradise
The poster is a television screen and the crack is a bed

Borrowed Time
The barman can do more than serve drinks. Give him a fright!

Escape from Pulsar 7
Stuck in the air vent? Jump!

Causes of Chaos
Give the rum to the cook, not the sailors

Redhawk
To overcome Fusor, wear the wellies
Give vase to curator
In the sewers, go N, U, U

Bored of the Rings
Pass Moronas gate by dropping something that will make you sneeze

Circus
Crack the whip at the lion to reveal something.

Clever Contacts

Here they be . . . Those brave souls who are prepared to put up with your infuriating letters and phone calls, and all for the sake of adventuring and the possibility of making new friends!

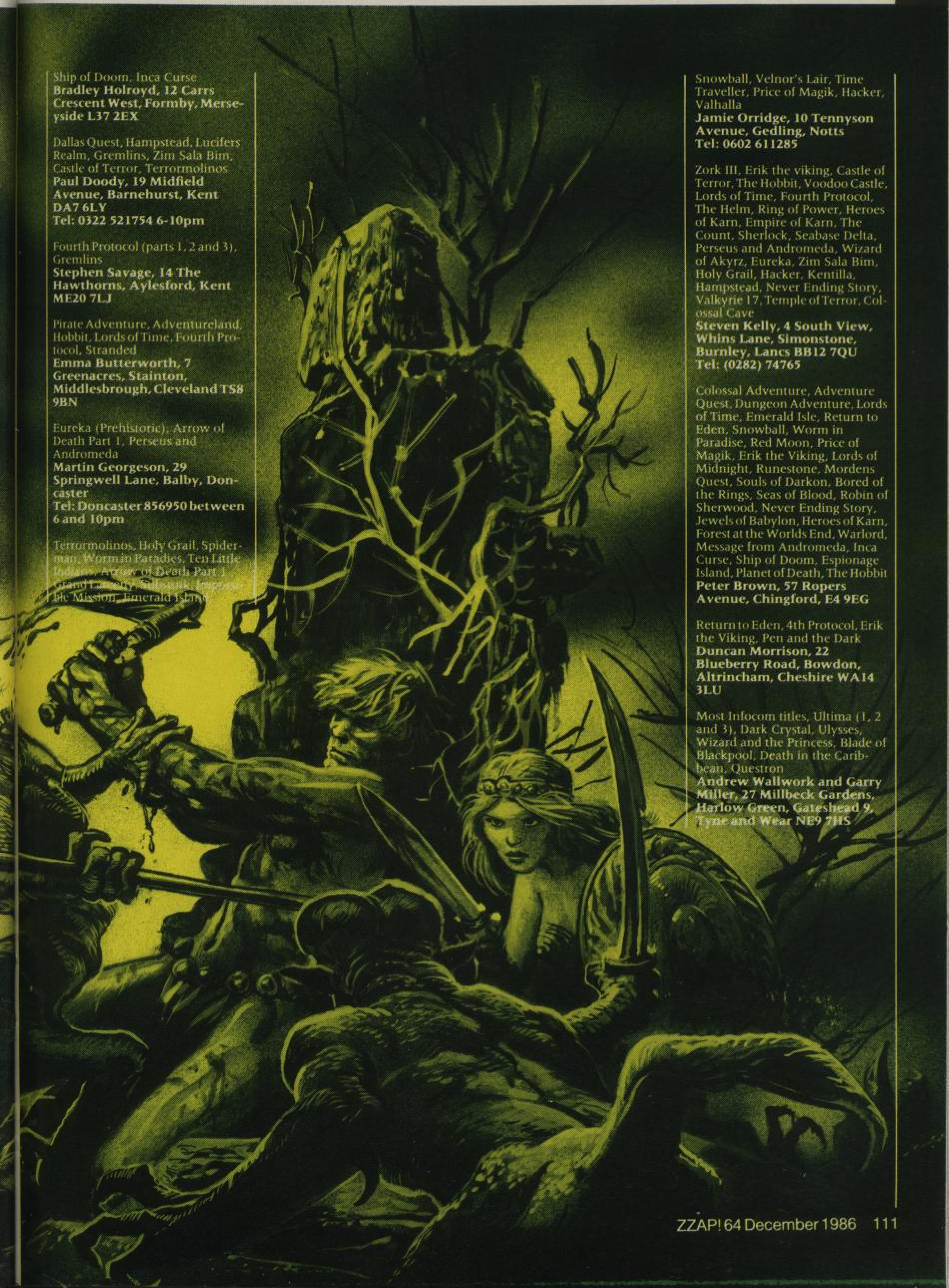
Due to lack of space this month, some of the brave souls writing in with offers of help have had to be held over to next month. Despair not! Your names will be featured in all their glory!

Don't forget to treat the CCs kindly . . . be enclosing an SAE or, if phoning, don't ring them up after 10.00 in the evening or at any other unsocial hour (such as 8.30am on a Sunday morning).

And remember — if they treat you badly, let the Wiz know. And if YOU treat THEM badly, I shall get to hear of it!

Terrormolinos, Hampstead, The Hulk, The Hobbit, Kentilla, Fourth Protocol, Dangermouse in the Black Forest, Espionage Island,





Ship of Doom, Inca Curse
Bradley Holroyd, 12 Carrs Crescent West, Formby, Merseyside L37 2EX

Dallas Quest, Hampstead, Lucifers Realm, Gremlins, Zim Sala Bim, Castle of Terror, Terrormolinos
Paul Doody, 19 Midfield Avenue, Barnehurst, Kent DA7 6LY
Tel: 0322 521754 6-10pm

Fourth Protocol (parts 1, 2 and 3), Gremlins
Stephen Savage, 14 The Hawthorns, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7LJ

Pirate Adventure, Adventureland, Hobbit, Lords of Time, Fourth Protocol, Stranded
Emma Butterworth, 7 Greenacres, Stainton, Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS8 9BN

Eureka (Prehistoric), Arrow of Death Part 1, Perseus and Andromeda
Martin Georgeson, 29 Springwell Lane, Balby, Doncaster
Tel: Doncaster 856950 between 6 and 10pm

Terrormolinos, Holy Grail, Spiderman, Worm in Paradies, Ten Little Indians, Arrow of Death Part 1, Grand Larceny, Sublogik, Impossible Mission, Emerald Island

Snowball, Velnor's Lair, Time Traveller, Price of Magik, Hacker, Valhalla
Jamie Orridge, 10 Tennyson Avenue, Gedling, Notts
Tel: 0602 611285

Zork III, Erik the viking, Castle of Terror, The Hobbit, Voodoo Castle, Lords of Time, Fourth Protocol, The Helm, Ring of Power, Heroes of Karn, Empire of Karn, The Count, Sherlock, Seabase Delta, Perseus and Andromeda, Wizard of Akyrz, Eureka, Zim Sala Bim, Holy Grail, Hacker, Kentilla, Hampstead, Never Ending Story, Valkyrie 17, Temple of Terror, Colossal Cave
Steven Kelly, 4 South View, Whins Lane, Simonstone, Burnley, Lancs BB12 7QU
Tel: (0282) 74765

Colossal Adventure, Adventure Quest, Dungeon Adventure, Lords of Time, Emerald Isle, Return to Eden, Snowball, Worm in Paradise, Red Moon, Price of Magik, Erik the Viking, Lords of Midnight, Runestone, Mordens Quest, Souls of Darkon, Bored of the Rings, Seas of Blood, Robin of Sherwood, Never Ending Story, Jewels of Babylon, Heroes of Karn, Forest at the Worlds End, Warlord, Message from Andromeda, Inca Curse, Ship of Doom, Espionage Island, Planet of Death, The Hobbit
Peter Brown, 57 Ropers Avenue, Chingford, E4 9EG

Return to Eden, 4th Protocol, Erik the Viking, Pen and the Dark
Duncan Morrison, 22 Blueberry Road, Bowdon, Altrincham, Cheshire WA14 3LU

Most Infocom titles, Ultima (1, 2 and 3), Dark Crystal, Ulysses, Wizard and the Princess, Blade of Blackpool, Death in the Caribbean, Questron
Andrew Wallwork and Garry Miller, 27 Millbeck Gardens, Harlow Green, Gateshead 9, Tyne and Wear NE9 7HS



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50 COPIES OF THE COMMODORE 64 VERSION OF GAUNTLET ALSO UP FOR GRABS!!!



ZZAP! COMP

One of the greatest arcade games ever to appear in the arcades must be the multi-player GAUNTLET. Believe it or not, there was a time when such a machine graced the Greasy Spoon Cafe here in Ludlow. Every lunchtime the entire ZZAP! team would leave the offices in a mad dash to get to the machine and feed ten pees into their favourite character. Jazza always chose Questor the Elf, fast on his feet, phenomenally quick on the draw, and very, very sneaky. He'd run ahead and grab all the various goodies before anyone else got a look in. Talk about type casting! Sean's choice was obvious too: the Mancunian mystic would mysteriously appear in control of Merlin the Wizard, from where his diminutive form could lob fireballs at the approaching nasties from the strategic position of second row.

'And what of Penn!?' I hear you cry. Well this minion can reveal that, true to character, Gazza would push his way through the thronging masses to get his sweaty hands on Thyra the Valkyrie's joystick. Makes me worry sometimes. But what of your humble minion? I would be left with Thor the Warrior, slow in mind and body, but strong and always left to clean up the mess that the others left in their wake.

The officially licensed version of GAUNTLET will very shortly be available on the 64 (see NEWSFLASH), so up to two players can enjoy all the thrills of the arcade game without spending all their lunch money to feed the characters (HOORAY!). US GOLD are immensely pleased with the way that the conversion is coming along, so much so that they're willing to give away a full blown GAUNTLET arcade machine to the overall winner of this blockbusting competition! Fifty copies of the Commodore 64 version of the game will be going to the runners up.

Hidden in this giant wordsquare are 22 US GOLD games. What we want you to do is find and circle all of them. When you've done that, cut out the coupon at the bottom the page and put it somewhere safe. Don't lose it — if you do, you won't be able to enter . . . You see, because the first prize in this competition is very special indeed, we've decided to split the competition into two parts — a big competition for a big prize. So, don't miss next month's ZZAP! Christmas Special if you want to stand a chance of winning a GAUNTLET ARCADE MACHINE. See you in December . . .

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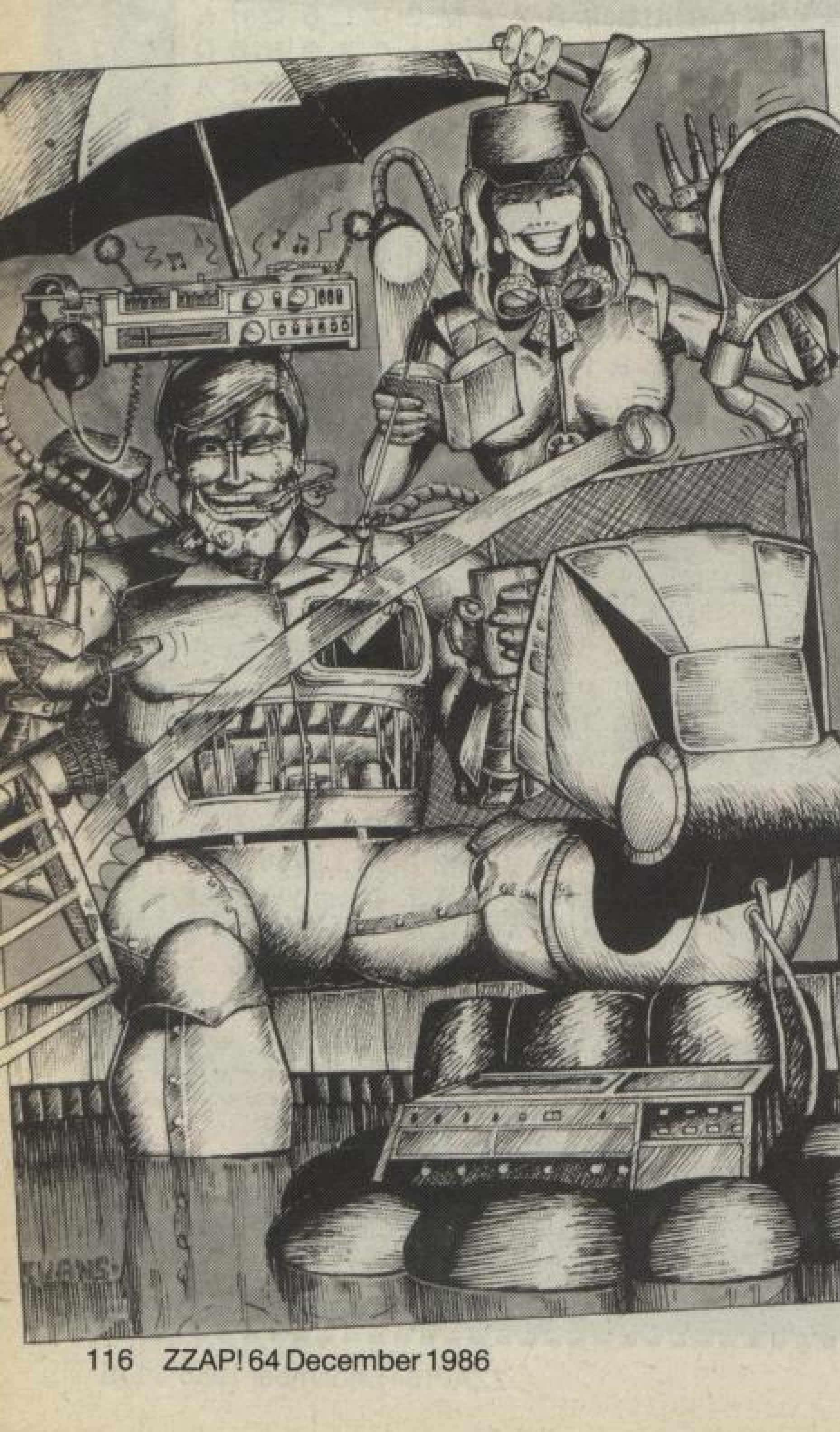
GAUNTLET
U.S. GOLD

US GOLD
ZZAP!
GAUNTLET
ONE TOKEN
(KEEP THIS SAFE)

WINNERS • WINNERS • WINNERS • WINNERS •

TOP SECRET



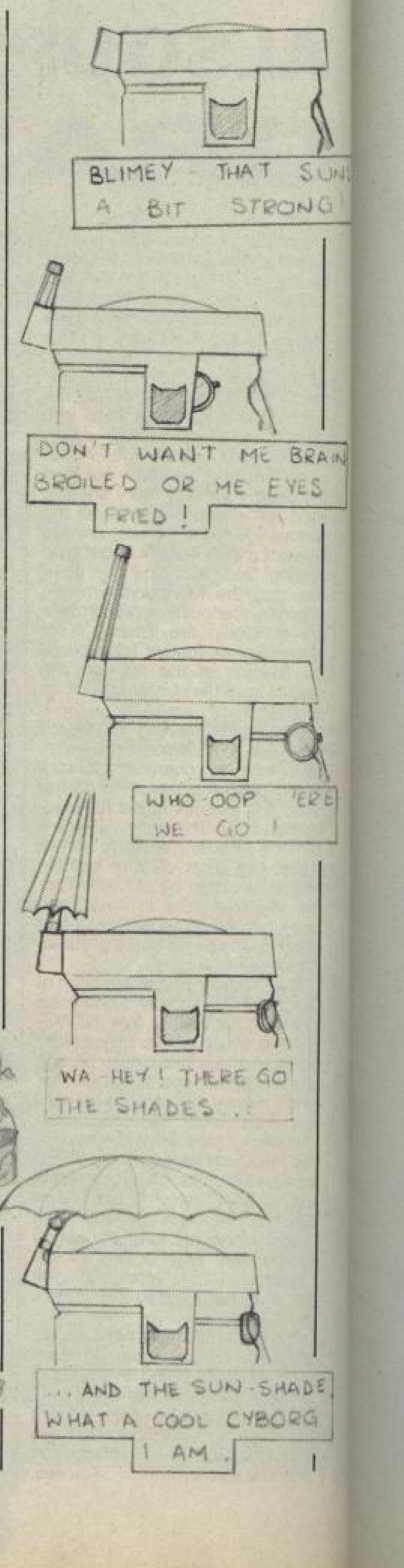


PART MAN PART CD

It was a hard task to pick the winner of the Compact Disc and CD vouchers from the huge mound of quality entries. Gary looking very PENNsively over the mountain of strap-on luxuries you designed for the carefree Cyborg. He eventually decided the prize should go to **Neil Evans** from **Clwyd, LL13 7PU** for his ideas for outrageous options for the robot in repose. Judging from the picture, British Leyland should use a couple of his ideas. The following runners up will all recieve a copy of CRL's new game CYBORG . . .

Mr Shaughnlessy, South Glamorgan, CF6 4RF; Garry McNeil, Corby, Northants; Stephen Thomas, Stockton-On-Tees, Cleveland; Jimmy Hunter, Leigh, Lancs; Billy Bann, Cleveland, TS26 7PN; San Miles, Sheffield, S56FS; Chris Brightman, Birmingham, B29 7PZ; Gareth Jones, Gwent, NP2 5EL; Richard Ansell, Kent, TN11 8QH; Daniel Polwarth, Essex, IG8 7RG; Angus Lee, Aberdeen, AB2 4UB; Paul Glancey, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE12 9RH; Stuart Hopkinson, Derbyshire, S42 5LF; Lionel Dorval, Essex, IG2 7PL; Michal Duncan, Edinburgh, EH8 8DZ; Tobias Thomas, London, SW14 8AR; William Chetwynd, Warks, CV10 0DR; Matthew O'Neill, West Midlands, W53 2BG; Sohail Ashraf, Edinburgh, EH10 4ET; Steven Murray, Aberdeen, AB1 6HY; Peter Probin, Crew, Cheshire; Steven Carroll, West Midlands, B75 6PQ; Simon Edwards, Kent, BR1 4EU, Richard Gorringe, Kent, CT11 8QP; Nik Langworthy, Glos, GL20 8S6; Paul Mace, Surrey, GU15 1LZ; Stephen Fathers, Suffolk, NR33 7HE; Gianfranco Manini, Glasgow, G46 6EJ; Karim Bovali, London, SW17 8LD; John Stevens, West Yorkshire, BD15 9AX





WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR?

MARTECH's WAR was the subject of a cunning (oh no not again) wordsquare where the first 50 correct combatants flushed out of their foxholes received a copy of the game with which to rage WAR on their 64. The lucky fifty veterans who made it out of Girly's back hole are . . .

D Miller, Suffolk, IP14 4DB; Scott Simpson, Middlesex, UB6 8NQ; Jonathan Crook, Dorking, RH4 3LJ; Mikael Smidt Jensen, Brabrand, Denmark; Oliver Barrow, London, NW10 8AW; Frazer Clark, Chichester, PO19 4EB; Stephen Knight, Launceston PL15 8DZ; David Stevenson, Walsall WS1 8EF; P Bartlett, Kent, ME7 5LG; G Metcalfe, Dunstable, LU6 1TN; Christopher Gough, Hindley, WN2 4BW; Ryan Mathiesen, Inverness, IV1 2HQ; Paul Hammond, Solihull, B92 7DH; Ben Landico, Billesdon, LE7 9AD; Aran Connelly, Mill Lane, NW6 1AD; Geoff Bayliss, Dunfermline, KY11 5QF; Niall McDermatt, Sheffield, S30 1TA; Aaron Ratcliffe, Wirksworth, DE4 4ER; Gerry Harty, St Judes, BS2 0DP; Nicholas Southern, Trowbridge, BA14 9JW; Mat Willson, Rippingale, PE10 0SP; Bert Scobbie, Gartsherrie, ML5 2EY; Neil Ertherton, Wimbledon, SW20 8SP; Antony Reale, Aldershot, GU11 3AB; Joseph Greenwod, Sheffield, S31 9YL; Stephen Morris, Worcester, WR5 2HH; Alex Morgan, Lenchwick, WR11 4TG; Chris Wells, Deal, CT14 6RA; Lee Labecki, Peterborough, PE4 6TN; Jeremy Cusworth, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 6AJ; Howard Thompson, Oxon, OX10 0HL; Colette Reid, Liverpool L11 2XR; Peter Mann, Leicester, LE6 2SA; Gavin Jackson, Portishead BS20 9UR; John-Paul Sena, Southsea, PO4 0QB; Roy Hunt, London, SE16 3HR; Adrian Chamberlin, Oxon, OX10 0PT; Paul Evans, West Sussex, BN15 0PG; Roger Gilchrist, Middlesborough, TS7 0EQ; Mr A.Lipman, Ilford, IG2 6AJ; 24170592 CPL Gregory, Lad Reme, BFPO 106; Chris Napier, Long Marston, HP23 4QL; Jonathan Lincoln, Middlesborough, TS6 0RG; Clive Lindsell, Middx, TW13 5NJ; Colin Spiller, Sussex, BN11 5NY; W.Hay, Tyne-and-Wear, NE40 3PU; Mr L.S Harrison, London, E4; Tony Lo, Merseyside, L15 7LF; Kevin Murphy, Fife, KY1 1PX; Matthew Crane, Herts, AL4 9YH

THE MOST AMAZING ZZAP! COMPETITION EVER

The ultimate in ego-widening competitions will see **D Priest** from **Gloucester, GL1 5JB** trotting all the way up to ZAPP towers where he'll be sat down, (sit just there please) for art supremo Oli Frey (now don't move about, there's a nice chap) will incorporate his features into the cover of the Crimble Special (there, finished!). The two lucky runners up will also be subjected to the merciless accuracy of Oli's airbrush as he captures them on canvas (it's artboard actually) when they visit the famous Art Garret for their sittings. Who are they? **Sean McKenzie** from **Mid Glamorgan, CF46 6NY** and **Mitchell Haines** from the **West Midlands, B73 6BH** — that's who.

LLOYD'S LOST RIBBON

Code crackers of a different nature were needed to break a joystick cypher in the OCEAN competition. Fifty successful cryptographers will each be receiving Lloyd's undying gratitude along with a copy of the game PARALLAX . . .

Simon Burrow, Birmingham, B16 9LN; D L Nash, Surrey, SM6 8QT; William You, West Midlands, B62 0HP; Ian Lambert, Tyne and Wear, NE37 3LF; Jeremy Parfitt, West Midlands, DY5 4DL; Alan Wave, Hants, SP10 4DZ; Adrian Hope, West Midlands, CV7 7NT; V Szarmach, Cumbria, CA26 3UT; Danny Blom, Birmingham, B15 2NG; Ratjinder Kang, West Midlands, B70 6QP; Richard Poyser, Worcestershire, WR10 1PW; Ernst Winfield, Notts, NG20 9AS; Gary Harding, Dorset, BH12 3DF; Ian Tows, Northumberland, NE24 4EE; Darren Stanley, Essex, SS7 3TW; Jonathan Jones, Swansea, SA6 7NU; Owen Williams, Avon, BA1 5SU; Paul Smith, Derbyshire, DE5 1EJ; Stephen Newton, Staffordshire, ST2 8JW; Cristopher Earp, Leicester, LE9 5SY; James Walker, Herts, AL5 4LR; Kevin Hoggard, Leicestrshire, LE13 1DY; Michal Fish, Pontypridd, CF38 1ES; David Smith, Devon, EX4 4RG; Steven Murray, Aberdeen, AB1 6HY; Stephen Fathers, Suffolk, NR33 7HE; Jason Humphries, West Midlands, WS3 3PU; Wayne Hughs, Norfolk, NR31 7HA; PD Stephens, Berks, RG4 7NT; Robert Syrad, Dorset, BH18 9BU; Richard Perry, Hull, HU7 5AB; Richard Lloyd, Surrey, SM5 2HD; Neil Shumsky, Cheshire, SK8 6HP; Nicholas Beech, Staffs, ST15 0QG; Ian Greenhouse, Staffs, ST5 8BY; John M.Barbour, Reading, RG4 7TR; Mark Bishop, West Midlands, DY3 3QB; Nicholas Mavity, Dorset, BH18 9NB; Kashif Darr, Manchester, M14 5SU; M.Taylor, Lincs, LN12 1LQ; Darryl Stokes, Herefordshire, HR6 9HA; Mark Currums, Merseyside, L62 6DN; Steven Ansell, Sutton Coldfield, B76 8SB; SD Davies, Liverpool, L4 2SP; Russell Higgs, Staffs, WS7 8SS; Chris Bartholomew, Leicester, LE2 8SQ; Mr Clive Ainsworth, Kettering, Northants; Mr Jerry Pang, Northolt, Middlesex; M.Clements, Avon, BA1 2YB; Steven Francis, Essex, SS11 8NA







SPECTRUM SCREENS

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ZZAP! COMP

30 COPIES OF TRAPDOOR ON OFFER

COURTESY OF PIRANHA

Cook up a meal and WIN! WIN!! WIN! WIN!!! WIN!! WIN!!! WIN! WIN!! WIN!! WIN!



The lovely Mandy Keyho down at PIRANHA is well chuffed with their latest Berk. No, Richard Eddy hasn't hung up his joystick to rush down to London to grovel at her feet, this particular Berk is the put upon hero of TRAPDOOR the game where you control Berk as he dreams up weird and wonderful culinary delights to satisfy his master's insatiable appetite. 'Fetch me a can of worms Berk!' and 'I want some eyeball crush!' he cries down to the depths of the kitchen where Berk must scamper around and catch, grow and cook all the dishes before his master gets too impatient and sacks him. 'Bring me some boiled slimies!' he bellows, and poor Berk has to wade around in the slime filled cellar and catch and cook the slippery slugs. Poor Berk, he barely gets a moments peace.

This all sounds a little too familiar to me. As I sit in the gloomier recesses of ZZAP towers, I wait for the next barked orders to shatter my tranquility. 'Fetch me a coffee!' barks a voice from the very depths of Girlie Penn's Black Hole. And off I go to try and sneak a mug from the quagmire of his desk. 'Mine's a tea!' whine the prattling primadonnas of the reviewing department as Jazza, Dicky and Paul all notice me trying to sneak off to wash the gel and hairspray from the Grand Girlie's mug. 'And change the cassette on the ghetto blaster while you're at it!' they cry.

Yes, Berk and myself suffer from very similar problems — only I have to wash and cook and clean and sort out comps and mailbags and . . . But I'm not one to complain.

Anyway, PIRANHA are going to give away a bendy Berk along with his friends Drutt the spider and Boni the skull — oh, and a copy of the game — to the winner, and 30 copies of the game to the runners up in this cool comp. All you have to do is design a masticating masterpiece for Berk's boss. The types of ingredients he likes have been mentioned but you can add anything else that you think might tickle his tonsils. You can draw a picture of the ultimate yucky meal or just send us your recipe for success. Once you've cooked up your entry put it on a low light and send it to us at **SLIME GLORIOUS SLIME, ZZAP! Kitchens, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB** to arrive before the December 31st. Happy eating!

ZZAP! Flash

N·E·W·S f·l·a·s·h···

THE MISSING GAUNTLET PICCIES . . .

If you read last month's news column you will probably have noticed that at the end of the piece concerning *Gauntlet* we said: 'here's a screen shot o'er which to cast your beady eye'. Well, there wasn't one, was there? Not even an iddly-piddly little microscopic one. Sorry about that folks, but it wasn't our fault — it's those silly-billies up in art again. Oh well, here are some new *Gauntlet* screen shots to make up for last month's deficiency . . .









A REAL DOG OF A PROGRAM

Gremlin Graphics have a new vertically scrolling, bas-relief shoot em up in the pipeline called *Bulldog*. In it you have to fly over many levels of horrendously well defended alien landscape and strafe the hell out of all the installations before confronting a giant mothership the end of each level.

There are no aliens to contend with, just the landscape and the missiles fired by gun emplacements. On your travels there are plenty of things which you can pick up and add to your ship like rapid fire, invincibility (for a while), extra fire power and extra speed. There are also hazards you can run over which do things like restrict your ship's movement, reduce your speed to a crawl or take away your extra fire power (sob). *Bulldog* should be finished during November, so there could well be a review in the next issue . . .

Thanks to Software Projects, 17 yr old Matthew Hicks **from Wrecclesham in Surrey — the winner of the DRAGON'S LAIR competition — receives his prize from ZZAP! Ed Gary Penn.**





HEAPS OF NEW ACTIVISION STUFF

An official *Transformers* game has already appeared on the Ocean label, but now Activision have got the rights to the ever-popular robot characters and are set to release their own version of the game. It's being designed by **David Crane**, author of such classics as *Ghostbusters* and *The Little Computer People Discovery Kit* and features eight different Transformer characters, each with its own strengths and abilities. The idea of the game is to destroy the evil Decepticons, which you must do by controlling all eight characters.

It's been almost a year since Lucasfilm last released a program, but now they've almost finished work on their latest product, *Labyrinth* — based on the Jim Henderson film of the same name. In the game you become a captive in the Labyrinth, a really weird world of corridors and passageways. The idea of the game is to escape within a thirteen hour time limit, a task which involves interacting with some really strange characters — the Goblin King, the riddle-filled wise man, an armed goblin guard and Alph and Ralph. We've already seen and played a preproduction copy of the game and it's certainly original, containing a sort of mini text adventure along with a huge animated arcade adventure. Unfortunately, it's so big that it doesn't look like it will go on cassette at all.

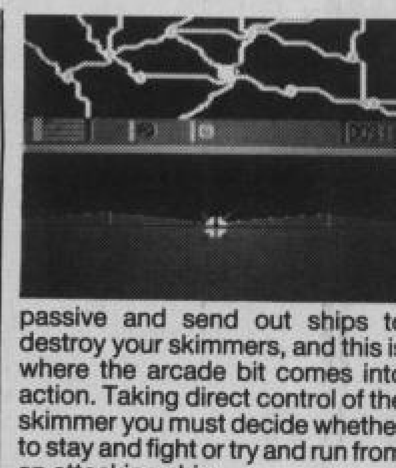
Shanghai is a strategy game derived from the ancient chinese game, Mah Jongg. The idea of the game is a simple one — from 144 randomized picture tiles of seven different suits players must snap off matching pairs until they run out of tiles or moves. The only problem is that players can only match tiles from the dragon's head or tail, so they must know where the tiles are and how to play their way to them. Sound's like a reviewer's nightmare . . .

Another game-of-the-film is *Howard the Duck*, based on the original Marvel cartoon creation and the new Lucasfilm movie. Playing the part of Howard you have to travel through the hazards of a perilous volcanic island to rescue your friends from the clutches of a horrible overlord. To help him in his task he's got a jet pack, a laser, an ultralite and of course he's skilled in the ancient arts of Quack-Fu . . .

MORE ON TRACKER

Tracker is a strategy/arcade game in the true sense of the word. Controlling up to eight different skimmer craft at once you must knock out the communication nodes between the central computer and its slave outposts to undermine the supremacy of the dominant Cycloid forces. Each skimmer can be controlled manually (which brings a 3D display into view) or put into auto pilot and sent to a preset position.

The strategy part comes into operation when you're working out which section of the giant map you're going to attempt to take over. There are over 2,000 nodes with tracks running between them, so a fair bit of planning is needed if your Cycloid-destroying mission is to succeed. The Cycloids aren't

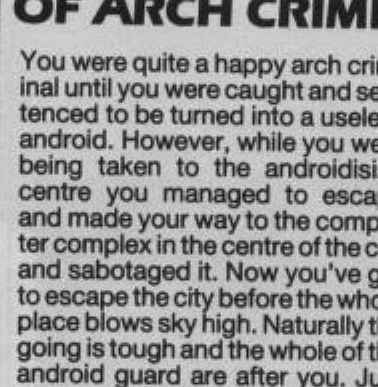


passive and send out ships to destroy your skimmers, and this is where the arcade bit comes into action. Taking direct control of the skimmer you must decide whether to stay and fight or try and run from an attacking ship.

Tracker should be finished around the end of November and will cost £14.95 for the cassette version and £17.95 for the disk.

OF ARCH CRIMINALS AND JUDGES

You were quite a happy arch criminal until you were caught and sentenced to be turned into a useless android. However, while you were being taken to the androidising centre you managed to escape and made your way to the computer complex in the centre of the city and sabotaged it. Now you've got to escape the city before the whole place blows sky high. Naturally the going is tough and the whole of the android guard are after you. Just to heap a little more trouble on your narrow shoulders there are six levels, each with loads of scrolling screens to battle through.



That's the scenario for the latest Melbourne House game, *Knucklebusters*. It's being written by Martin 'MAT' Sneape of Compunet and Thalamus loading screen fame and features some great graphics and an absolutely am-m-m-mazing Rob Hubbard sound track.

Another newie in the Melbourne House pipeline is *Judge Dredd*, the officially licenced game of the comic character. Playing the mighty judge you have to patrol the many screens of Mega City 1 and its Undercity to track down unsolved crimes. Naturally your task isn't an easy one and you'll have to rely heavily on your Judge's training to combat such horrors as robodogs, sattellats, rats and the sub-human dwellers of the underworld. Still, your Lawgiver pistol with its supply of ricochet, high explosive, armour piercing and heat-seeking bullets will help you to lay down the law. Won't they?

24th CENTURY DRUG RUNNING

Sky Runner is the name of the new release from Cascade. Written by Ian Martin, the author of *ACE*, this game puts you into the role of a futuristic vice squad patrol group who must clear the tree-covered planet Naibmoloc of drug runners and their massive drug manufacturing machines. This involves flying above the trees and knocking out the giant factory towers, then speeding down into the forest itself and pursuing the drug runners on your jet skimmer.

The whole game was inspired by the brilliant 'jetbike chase through the trees scene' which appeared in *Return of the Jedi* and everything takes place in 3D first person perspective. Definitely enthralling stuff — there should be a review next month.



PSI WARRIOR II



Nexus Software (they of the jolly box) have just announced the impending release of two new titles — *Warrior II* and *Assault Machine*.

Assault Machine is an icon driven arcade/strategy game in which you must subdue a convict planet. Controlling four search droids and three attack craft it is your task to drop down onto the planet surface and uncover its secrets. Once you've done that, you have to slip behind the controls of an attack craft and blast installations with torpedoes and laser fire. Sounds fun . . .

The long awaited follow-up to *Psi Warrior* (which was released exactly two years ago) features the same hoverplane riding soldier and some really weird and wonderful gameplay. The idea of the game is simple — enter an ancient pyramid and discover its secrets. Naturally there is a twist in the game, which comes in the form of the strange obstacles and puzzles, all of which have to be overcome. The original Beyond program is quite a favourite amongst the older members of the ZZAP! team, but we'll just have to see how the new version fares when it's reviewed next month.

ASSAULT MACHINE

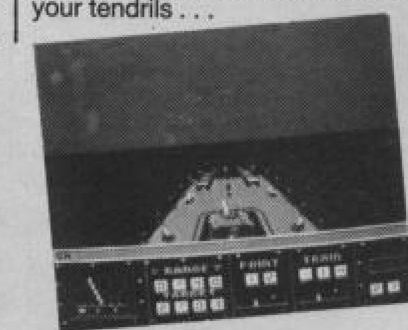


BOOM BANG-A-BANG

Take a trip back to World War II, courtesy of the latest Epyx 'action simulation'. *Destroyer* (for that is its name) is set in the summer months of 1942 and puts you in complete command of an American sea-going destroyer in the South Pacific. Controlling all aspects of the ship — engineering, navigation, sonar, guns, and the Captain's decisions — you have to patrol your sector and make sure it's clear of enemy planes, boats and submarines.

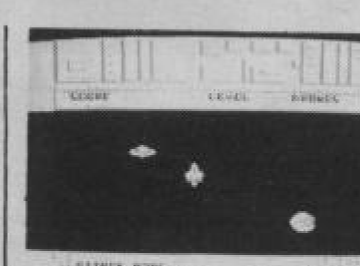
It certainly looks like a promising product with some incredible attention to graphic detail. But will it play as good as it looks? Well, there'll be a review as soon as those nice US Gold people send us a copy. Until then here are a couple of screen shots to titillate your tendrils . . .





WOW! IT'S LIKE, ZARJAZ MAN

Ariolasoft have a new shoot em up in the pipeline called *Zarjaz*. A strange zone of space has been discovered which doesn't obey our rules of physics, so you're dispatched to find out exactly what's going on . . . and end up fighting for your life. This section of space doesn't like you very much and all manner of weird and wonderful things are sent to destroy your craft. Just for the record, the game also features some We MUSIC and lots of sprites in the border. Coo.





Other 'Arry 'Olasoft programs which should be ready around Chrimble time are: *They Stole a Million* (a cops 'n' robbers game detailed in issue 17), *Blitzkrieg* (a wargame which features action screens) and *Camelot Warriors* (an arcade adventure). More news when we have it.

A BRAND NEW LABEL

Ariolasoft are releasing three new shoot em ups around Christmas time on a new label called **Reaktor**. *The Centurions* is based on the cartoon series of the same name and features the three heroes battling against the evil Doc Terror. The finished product will have, and I quote: 'digitised speech and amazing graphics'.

A rather unlikely sounding title called *Mountie Mick's Death Ride* has you riding atop the Trans Canada Express in an attempt to get to the driving locomotive. The only trouble is there are certain criminal elements who object to your presence on the train, and are determined to kill you off.

The final offering is called *Warehouse Shoot-Out*. Playing a criminal on the run you must outshoot the numerous gun-toting policemen and detectives and get to freedom. Unfortunately, they've got you pretty well pinned down . . .

NEW LEADER BOARD COURSES

Those of you who are getting a bit too good at or bored with the four standard *Leaderboard* courses will be pleased to hear that US Gold have just released *Leaderboard Tournament Courses*. It's a datadisk/cassette which you can load into an already booted *Leaderboard* program to get four brand spanking new courses. Don't forget — you need to have an original *Leaderboard* program to be able to run the new courses, they won't work on their own.

The new courses are slightly disappointing since they look and play very similarly to the original ones, although it's true to say that they're far more difficult. They **don't** contain any new features like trees or sand traps — these will appear in the new *Executive Leaderboard* which will be available later on this year. The *Leaderboard Tournament Courses* are available on both cassette and disk format for £4.99 and £6.99 respectively.

MICRORHYTHM

Firebird, £1.99 cass

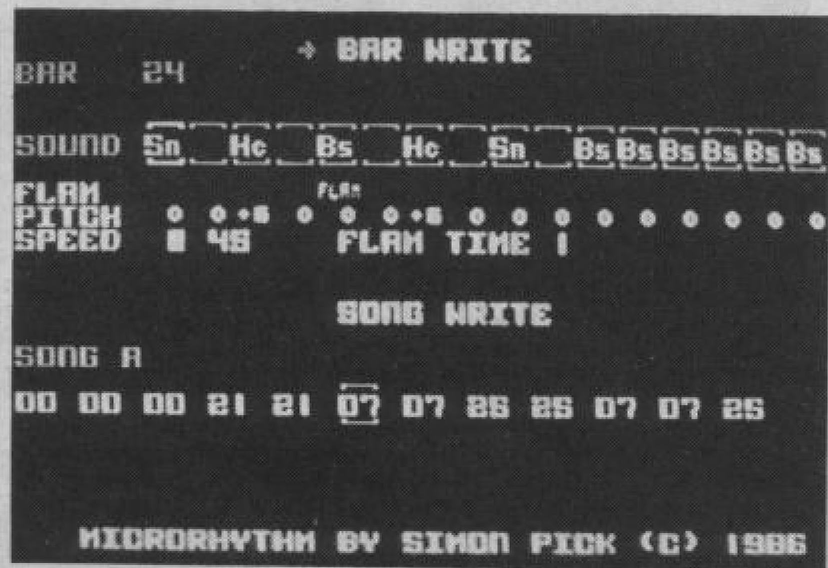
Julian Rignall has a bash (yuk) at Firebird's new drum machine program and comes to the conclusion that it can't be beat (double yuk) . . .



If you've ever fancied turning your 64 into a proper drum machine or just felt that you might have some sort of rhythmic bent, then take a look at this new release from Firebird. Although it's in the same price range as the millions of other budget games, **Microrhythm** is the most professional drum machine available for the 64. I know it sounds silly, but believe me — for a couple of quid you make your 64 sound like a complete drum kit!

The cassette comes complete with thirteen preset sounds — base drum, snare, three toms, two wood, clap, two hi hats, and two cymbals — all of which can be used various forms in your rhythms.

Microrhythm has two main modes of operation — BAR WRITE and SONG WRITE. Using them both you can write a bar, or series of bars and then sequence them into a 'song' or rhythmic backing track. Here's a breakdown of both modes of operation:



BAR WRITE

Writing a bar is one of the most enjoyable aspects of this program as it lets you be totally creative and very noisy. There are two ways you can write a bar, either in realtime or by working out your rhythm and putting single beats into the bar. A maximum of sixteen beats can be inserted into a bar or you can decrease the length of the bar to a minimum of one beat if you so desire.

Sounds are inserted into a bar by pressing any key along the QWERTYUIOP line. A cursor whizzes along the bar and every time it goes over an inserted drum beat the relevant sound is played. Alternatively, drum beats can be positioned anywhere on the bar by using the cursor keys. If the bar is a little too slow or fast, then the tempo can be changed (there are fifty settings).

To produce some different sounds you can change the pitch of a beat (there are sixteen different pitch settings) and give the impression that there are more drum sounds. If the pitch settings are used cleverly you can produce some quite brilliant tom run downs and some really weird effects. Beats can also be 'flanged' with one of eight settings to make them sound more 'spacious'.

SONG WRITE

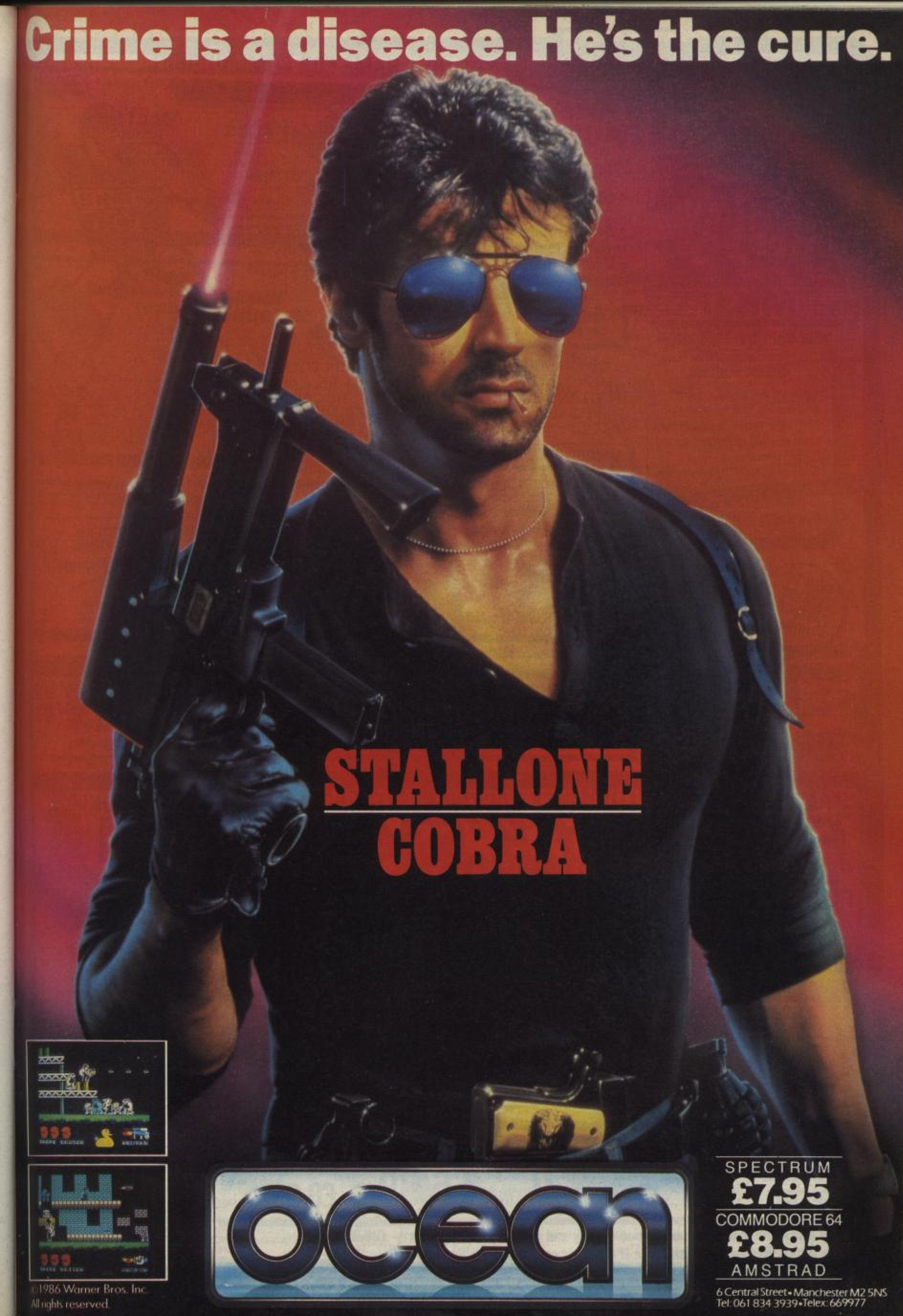
Once you've written a series of bars they can be sequenced using the SONG WRITE mode. All you have to do is call up a bar by typing its number, then you can insert it into the sequence by pressing RETURN. You can repeat bars as many times as you like and up to 99 different bars can feature in the sequence. Fortunately, sequences can be saved out to tape for future use.

Another novel feature of **Microrhythm** is that you can play drums from the keyboard by entering KEYBOARD PLAY mode and prodding various keys to beat out a rhythm. Not very productive, but noisy fun nevertheless.

The best thing about **Microrhythm** though, is that the facility exists to load in a different set of sampled sounds. Firebird aren't promising anything, but there is the possibility of say, some animal sounds and other 'alternative' noises in the reasonably near future!

This is a really amazing drum program, better than anything else I've seen or heard on the Commodore, and some of the more expensive dedicated drum machines. You can sit down and bash out a really great sounding drum solo or build up a complete rhythmic backing track. The quality of the drum sounds has to be heard to be believed — no hiss, crackle or anything, just crisp bashing sounds. The program is brilliantly presented and extremely well thought out. Its real beauty, however, is that it's easy enough for a complete novice to use, but isn't condescendingly plebian for a serious musician. It's just about impossible not to produce something which sounds tunefully rhythmic, unless you try really, really hard, but at the same time the program is flexible enough to produce any amount of varied and professional sounding beats — your imagination's the limit. At two quid Firebird are practically giving the program away, and you'd be silly to miss it.





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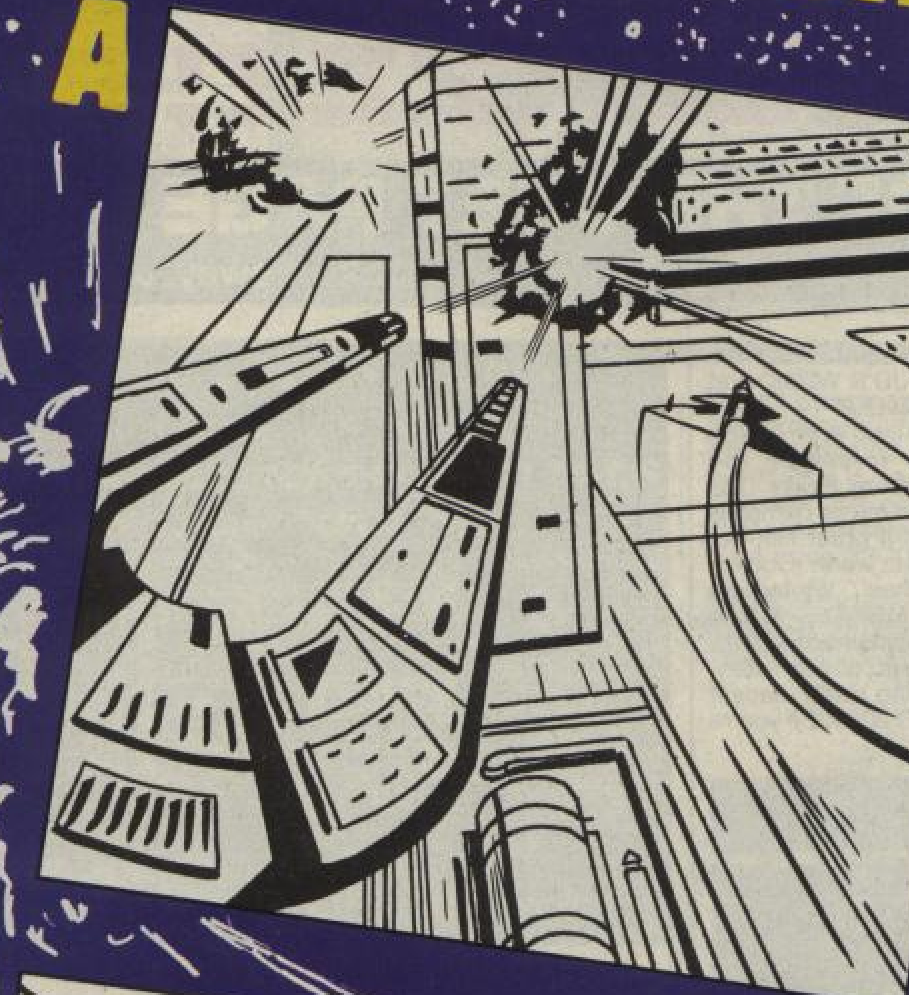
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TWENTY FIVE Copies Of AUDIOGENIC's PSYCASTRIA

Up For Grabs!

A



B



After a long day of lugging mail-sacks and trying to avoid the unwanted attentions of the Girlie Ed, there's nothing better than venting my frustration on a good bout of alien bashing. Unfortunately, Mummy Minion gets a little upset when she finds me cheerfully destroying wave after wave of intelligent life forms. I always tell her that if I don't wipe them out, they're going to take over the world and she'll never be able to go shopping in Woolies again. But you know what Mums are like — it's all to no avail. Still, I can always lock myself in my bedroom, drag out my 64 from behind my display of early Victorian cleaning equipment and load up a fast shoot-the-aliens-and-save-Woolies type game without upsetting anyone's finer feelings on alien lifeforms.

The game I'm playing at the moment is PSYCASTRIA — and it's a fierce battle I can tell you! AUDIOGENIC are going to give away 25 copies of the game — complete with speech and everything — to the runners up in this competition. 'But what if I win?!' I hear you cry. Aha! Well, the winner will receive the original painting used for the cover artwork of PSYCASTRIA! Wowee!

All you have to do is carefully look at the two pictures that Ian from the Art garret has put together. Simple, eh? Well — not quite . . . Unfortunately, due to the colossal amount of work Ian has to do whilst chained to his desk for 16 hours a day, his rushed attempts have resulted in a few mistakes in picture B. So, simply put a ring around the mistakes and pop picture B into an envelope, marking clearly on the back the number of mistakes that the poor man has made, then staple your entry to your local postie and ask him to take it to: **IAN'S ARTY ERRORS, ZZAP! Towers, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB** to arrive here before the 31st of December.

ZZAP! COMP

MORE P-K-CH-LICK! BRING! BRING! BEEEEP! BEEEEP! SKRZZZEEEKZZ! SKRAAAEEEKZZZ! . . .

THE RETURN OF THE CNET PAGE

Thanks to Alternative Telephone Voyeur JULIAN RIGNALL. Take it away, Jazza . . .

Sorry about the lack of any Compunet page last month, but there really weren't enough decent demos to warrant a page. Oh well, at least this month is completely the opposite and there are all manner of new demos out and about in the dusty DIRs of the net — it must be the cold weather encouraging everyone to huddle round their 64s once again.

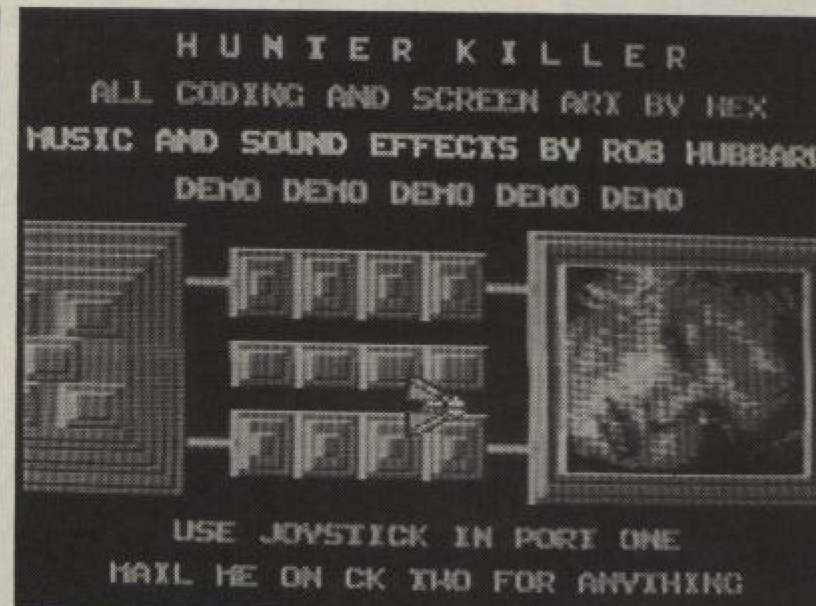
Hugh Binns, **Skuzz**, **Spidey** and **Andy** have just produced the AIRWOLF DEMO (GOTO 206502), a really nice picture of the Airwolf helicopter (by Hugh) with some jolly music. There's no scrolling message, instead the words pop up and down one at a time from the bottom of the screen.



Gasp! The Airwolf Helicopter as seen in THE AIRWOLF DEMO from HUGH BINNS, SKUZZ, SPIDEY and ANDY

GI-JO has recently uploaded four new demos, all of which can be found in GI-JO'S HOVEL (GOTO 204572). GI-JO'S HORROR and GI-JO'S MOODY are quite amusing digitised pictures of none other than Gi-Jo, and the other two — GI-JO'S WEIRD and GI-JO'S TECHNIQUE — have multi-directional (and even upside down) scrolling messages and **Michael Winterberg** music. The former of the two music demos is really good with a great film-like atmosphere and is worth a look.

Another Michael Winterberg demo — BRILL MUSIC — is also worth a BUY. It contains four different pieces of music, all very listenable and featuring really decent bass lines. GOTO 206502 if you're interested.



HUNTER KILLER from HEX

Hex — aka Cory (CK2) — has recently uploaded two new demos, one called HUNTER KILLER and the other featuring the SANXION loading music. HUNTER KILLER consists of a spaceship flying over a horizontally scrolling bas-relief backdrop with the music from ONE MAN AND HIS DROID. You can change the colour scheme of both the scenery and the ship and also slow down and speed up the scrolling. Quite pleasant, especially if you haven't got a demo with the ONE MAN AND HIS DROID music in it. The SANXION loading screen music is pretty basic however, with only a simple screen to compliment the music. Still, it's well worth a BUY (GOTO 206400).



Boo! GI-JO's HORROR

DENE'S DRUID DEMO by **DTC1** is really neat and has the **Bob Stevenson** loading picture along with the title screen music from Firebird's game. If you happen to be loafing around 204265 then give it a BUY. Another similar sort of demo is THE OFFICIAL WARHAWK demo by **SIR** which can be found by going to 199282. Again, it features both the loading screen and the music from the respective game — thanks to Rob Hubbard and Firebird.

If you go and check out **Rob Hubbard**'s directory then you'll be able to pick up the ZOOLOOK DEMO which features the music from the forthcoming Durell game CHAIN REACTION along with an unusual 'scrolling' message. The



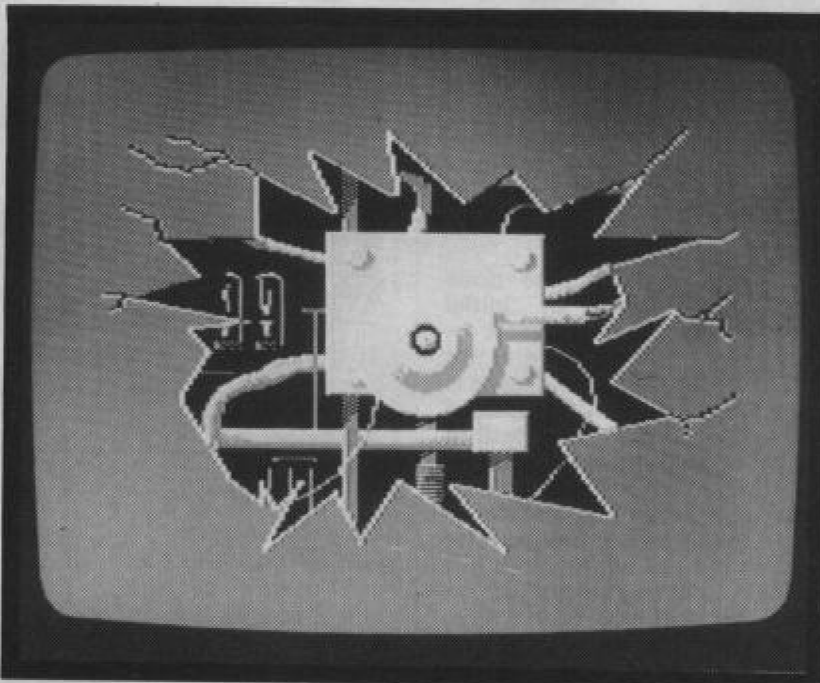
Growl . . . GI-JO's MOODY

music is a really neat version of the Jean-Michel Jarre composition and is certainly one of Hubbard's best pieces to date. GOTO ROB, and while you're there have a look at some of his other music demos.

THE DRIVE AD II by **Goblin** and **Ian** features a picture of a disk drive, an old piece of BOGG music and a scrolling message. It's nothing special or unusual (Goblin himself admits that it only took him three hours to knock up) but is worth a look if you've got a spare few minutes to download it (GOTO 207306).

If you GOTO 206424 you'll find **Geoff and Tob's first demo — CATHODE CHAOS. It's a pretty nifty idea, and although it doesn't work wonderfully it's well worth downloading, just for the initial laugh.**

If you're interested there are a couple of Jaybird (JB20) demos at 204203 and 206264, both with



scrolly messages and music by Rob Hubbard. **LH5** has uploaded THE HUDDY DEMO, a static picture of our very own Rockford which has some music with it. If you're interested GOTO 204974. There's also a very silly (and amusing) two-part program called MOANS (oh . . . ooh . . . ah . . . oh . . .) which can be found at 207290 and 207289. Download it and see what your granny thinks!

PARTYLINE has been fun recently, what with a newly found 'feature' which allows you to use the same alias as another PLINEr! (No, not their ID). One evening saw THREE 'lino!!'s engrossed in conversation at the same time, all trying to convince each other that they were the 'real' 'lino!!'. It freaked me out at the time along with a few other people!

See you next month — if we get our bill paid on time!

J A Z

An interesting parcel arrived at ZZAP! Towers the other day . . . Inside was a letter and disk from some 'Dutch 64 freaks' called the 1001 Crew. They asked if we would be so kind as to print some of their 'interesting demos' — supplied on aforementioned diskette. So, we loaded in the first demo, which turned out to be something of a shock . . . It was a portion of Bob Stevenson's Tutankhamen picture — which filled the whole screen! Somehow, the 1001 Crew have managed to dispose of the border — and as you hopefully can see from these screen shots the effect is quite stunning.

One of the demos mentioned that these full screen pictures were done using ESCOS — Expanded Screen COnstruction Set — and consisted of either 56 or 112 expanded sprites, some of which are 'in' the top and side borders. I've no idea how it's done, but really I hope someone puts the effect to good use in a game!



A full screen Albert Einstein wonders how it's done . . .

Tutankhamen — as you've never seen him before! A full screen picture from the 1001 Crew

ZZAP! TEST

MAD NURSE

Firebird, £1.99 cass, joystick only

The health service has always been a popular career move — lots of chance for promotion as well as the odd perk like taking home the used syringes to use as sewing needles, and so on. However, like any job, you have to start at the bottom and work your way up. Straight out of nursing college and into your first hospital, life isn't going to be easy. All them howling babies screaming for food and water and milk and love and hugs and attention and nappy changes, it's enough to drive you round the twist!

Nevertheless you, along with your fellow trainees, enter the hospital just as the last lot of students leave. They weren't very good. In fact they were awful and the baby ward is in utter chaos. The little darlings have all clambered out of their cots and are roaming around willy nilly.



To be brutally honest Mad Nurse **had me bored stiff after a mere half an hour of play. I was hoping for a good laugh after all that I had heard, but even seeing yabbering babies being electrocuted didn't evoke any laughter from me at all. The sound of the baby dying sounds more like a dalek, and as for the ghastly theme tune . . . Don't like it.**

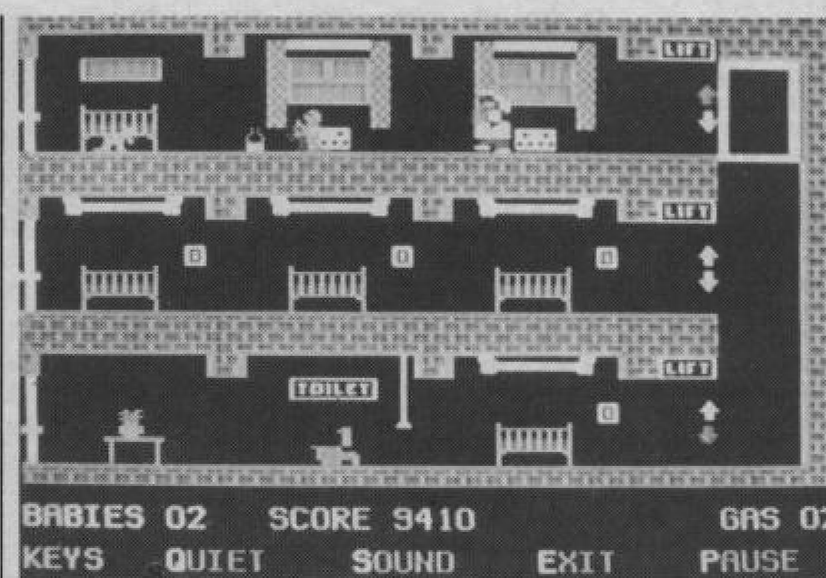


This game does have an initial novelty factor — after all it's not often you can get away with throwing babies down lift shafts and letting them drink urine samples. The trouble is that once you've watched them fry, frazzle or fall a few times the novelty wears off and what you're left with is a rather dull collect em up. The graphics aren't bad, the sound is quite jolly, but screens and screens of the same thing? No thanks.

As you might expect, babies aren't the most responsible of creatures: horrible grimy pink things that make ghastly noises at the most ridiculous times at night, and they're very inquisitive. Plug sockets and mysterious boxes hold a fatal attraction for the little dears and too much prodding and poking ends in a nasty shock for them — a 240 volt shock to be precise.

Each ward in the hospital is split into three levels, sometimes with a single cot on each floor, and occasionally more. A counter on the status screen shows how many babies are on the loose. Playing the part of Brenda Bumwipe you must chase after each one of the little horrors, pick them up in your caring arms and deposit them in their own little cots. But who wants to be cooped up in a horrid hospital cot eh? Not the babies that's for sure. Out they clamber and begin wandering again.

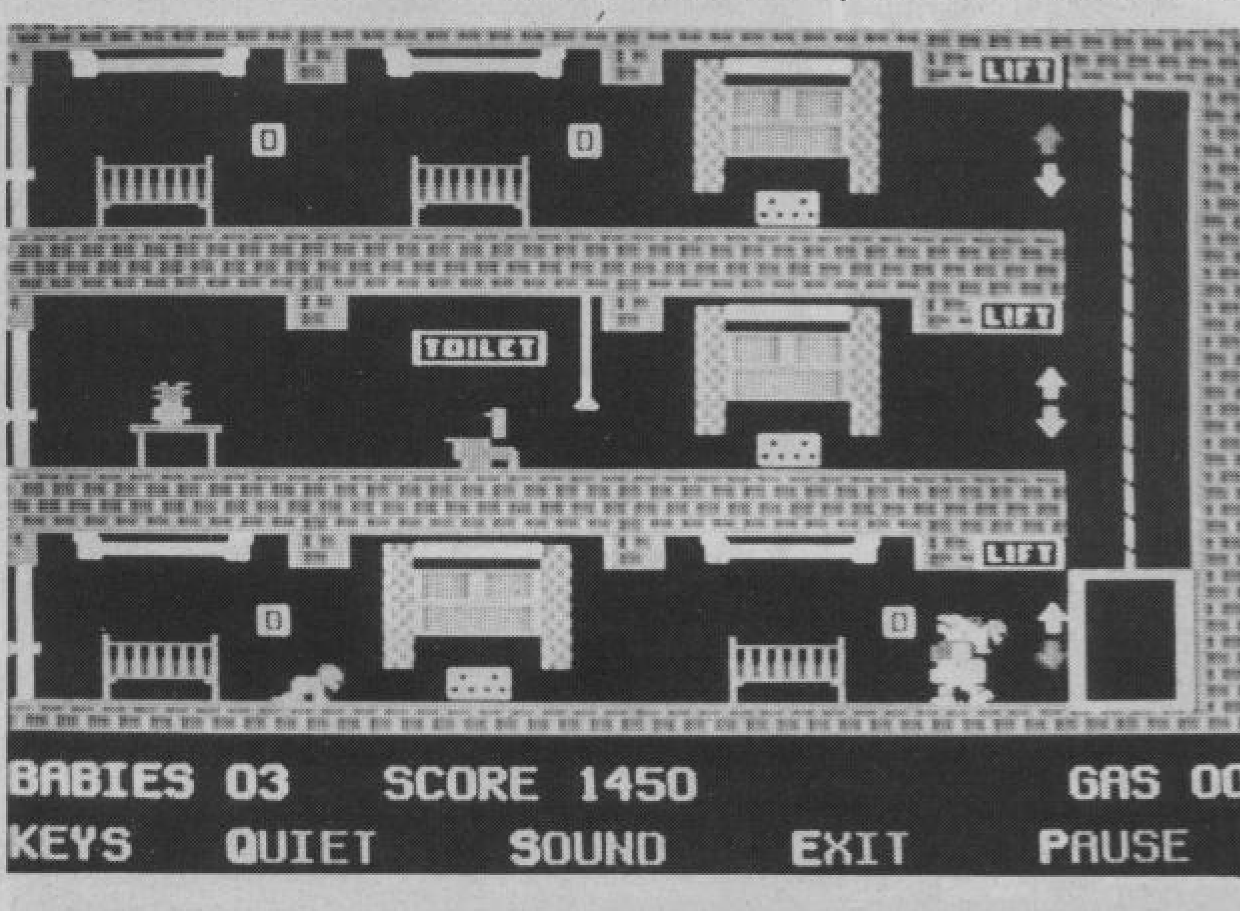
Once you have collected up all the babies and put them back in their cots you can move onto the next ward. The wards rarely vary in layout, but as you proceed the baby population begins to grow and it becomes increasingly difficult to cope. It's just as well that you have five trainees to your credit — if poor old Brenda Bumwipe gets the boot then Fiona Feedface will have to step in and take over, and so on until all five trainees have been given the sack.





Dropping babies down lift shafts or onto plug sockets was fun for a while, but once the novelty wore off I found Mad Nurse **too monotonous to continue. The graphics are reasonable and the music is quite jolly, but one screen of simple action isn't enough. Still, if you've got two quid to spare and want a simple platform game then you'll find** Mad Nurse **fits the bill quite nicely.**





PRESENTATION 85%
An attractive front end.

GRAPHICS 34%
Poor sprites and a simple backdrop.

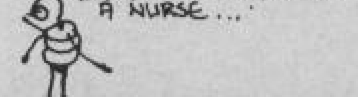
SOUND 68%
Several jolly tunes play throughout.

HOOKABILITY 49%
Fun for a few games . . .

LASTABILITY 28%
. . . but there's not enough variety to keep you playing.

VALUE 38%
Not much game for two quid.

OVERALL 32%
A novel idea which hasn't made a decent game.





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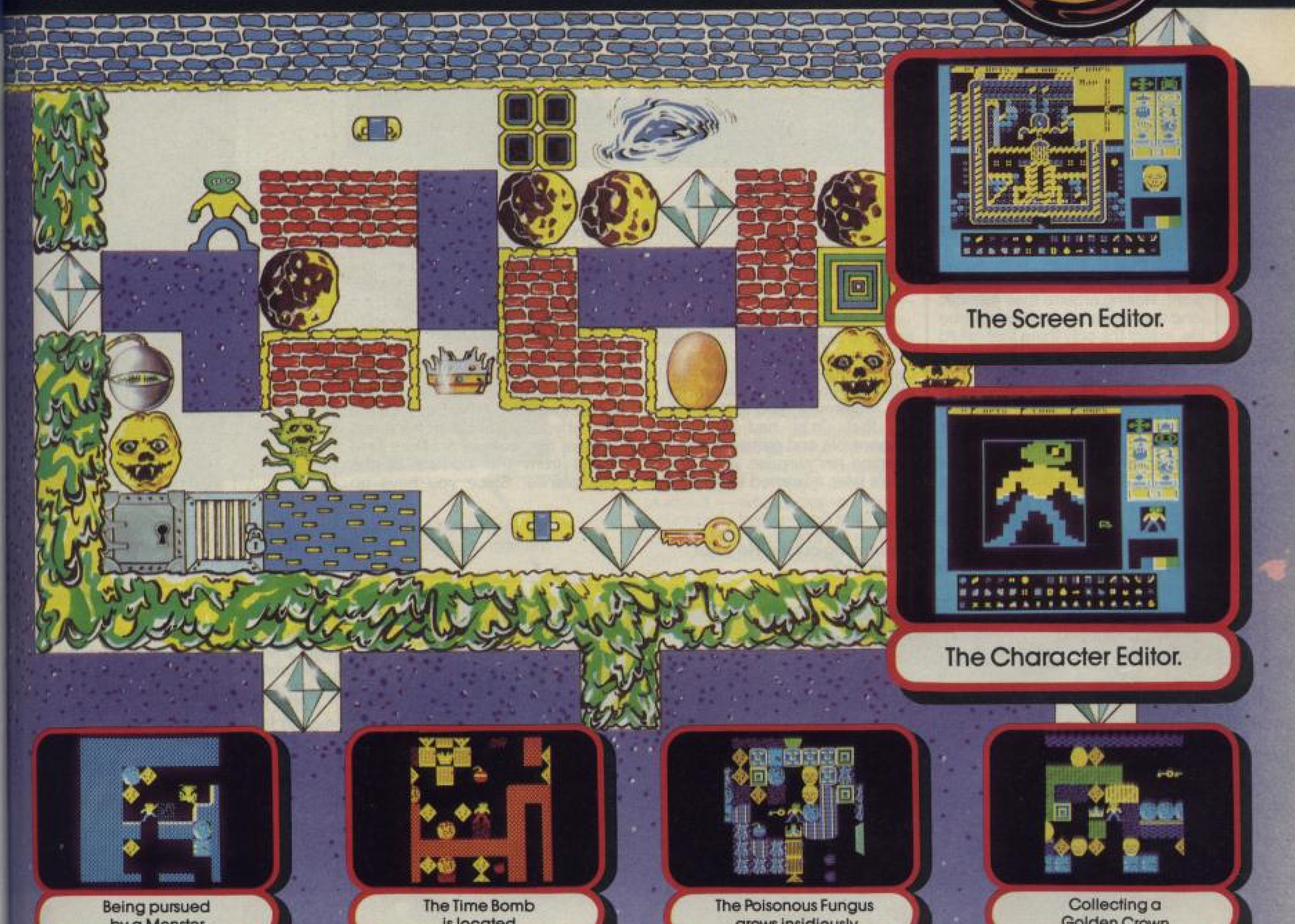
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Last Christmas saw the release of Repton 2, larger and much more challenging than before. Acorn User's Technical Editor Bruce Smith wrote: "Repton 2 is better than anything I've played on the BBC Micro or Electron. Brilliant!"

Now, completely rewritten and improved for the Commodore, Amstrad, BBC Micro and Electron, we proudly present Repton 3. For the first time, a screen-designer is included: try to devise screens that will perplex your friends, then see if you can solve their newly-designed screens. Another innovation is the character-designer which enables you to design your own monsters, rocks, eggs, spirits, diamonds . . . any or all of the game's characters can be redefined as you wish.

Repton 3 is much larger than its predecessors — it has 24 fascinating screens, and players who are skilful enough to complete them all can enter our prize competition described below. All the favourite Repton characters have been retained, together with several new features: a creeping poisonous fungus which grows at an alarming rate; time bombs and time capsules (for puzzles in the 4th dimension); and golden crowns as well-deserved rewards for your endeavours. **Can YOU complete Repton 3?**

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ZZAP! TEST



BOBBY BEARING

The Edge, £9.95 cass, joystick or keys

Technofear: a land of steel inhabited by creatures of steel — living ball bearings to be precise. Every ball living in Technofear is happy, with everything a ball bearing could ever want. Rolling around their metallic land they live a full and hassle-free life, in fact the only thing that could ever endanger their existence resides in the Metaplanes: an evil and twisted land surrounding Technofear. So, smart bearings stay in their homestead and never stray beyond the city limits.

This game concerns a large family of bearings who live in a cosy semi-detached in Technofear. Mummy and Daddy bearing, Bobby (the oldest of the kids), Bertie, Barnaby, Bartholomew and Billy all live together in perfect harmony. Well, they did — until now . . .

It all started when Cousin Ozzy came to stay. Ozzy tried to make amends for his past misdemeanours by volunteering to take the younger bearings for a roll. Mummy agreed to this, thinking that Ozzy had become a responsible and mature spheroid. Imagine her surprise when a few hours later a worried Police Bearing dropped by to tell her that her youngsters and cousin had strayed out of Technofear jurisdiction . . . and hadn't come back! Mummy was distraught, so she called upon eldest son — Bobby — for help. Bobby thought for a few seconds, then volunteered to enter the Metaplanes and find them . . .

Bobby Bearing is a flick screen, 3D isometric perspective arcade adventure in which you take on the role of young Bobby on his quest to save his younger brothers (and Ozzy) from the horrors of the Metaplanes. Since you have no idea where your idiot cousin has taken your brothers, you must scour the landscape in an attempt to find them.

Once you have found one of your brothers you must push him to safety, all the way back to the exit to Technofear. However, the exit to Technofear can only be kept open for a limited period of time, so if your brothers aren't rescued before the gate closes, you will remain in the Metaplanes forever!

Bobby prepares to dash under some moving cubes. He's not going to get splattered this time . . . is he?





Although Bobby Bearing **is superficially similar to** Spindizzy, **there are many differences between the two.** Spindizzy **is primarily a puzzle solving game, whereas** Bobby Bearing **is more of an exploration and rescue mission with a few puzzles thrown in for good measure. The different bearings all have their own character and make the game all the more enjoyable to play. Bobby looks so cute as he rolls over the landscape with an inane grin spread across his face, and the evil bearings smile maliciously as they bump poor Bobby senseless. Though lacking in variety,** Bobby Bearing **is a highly addictive and very playable game which shouldn't be missed.**





'I COULDN'T HELP GRINNING INANELY



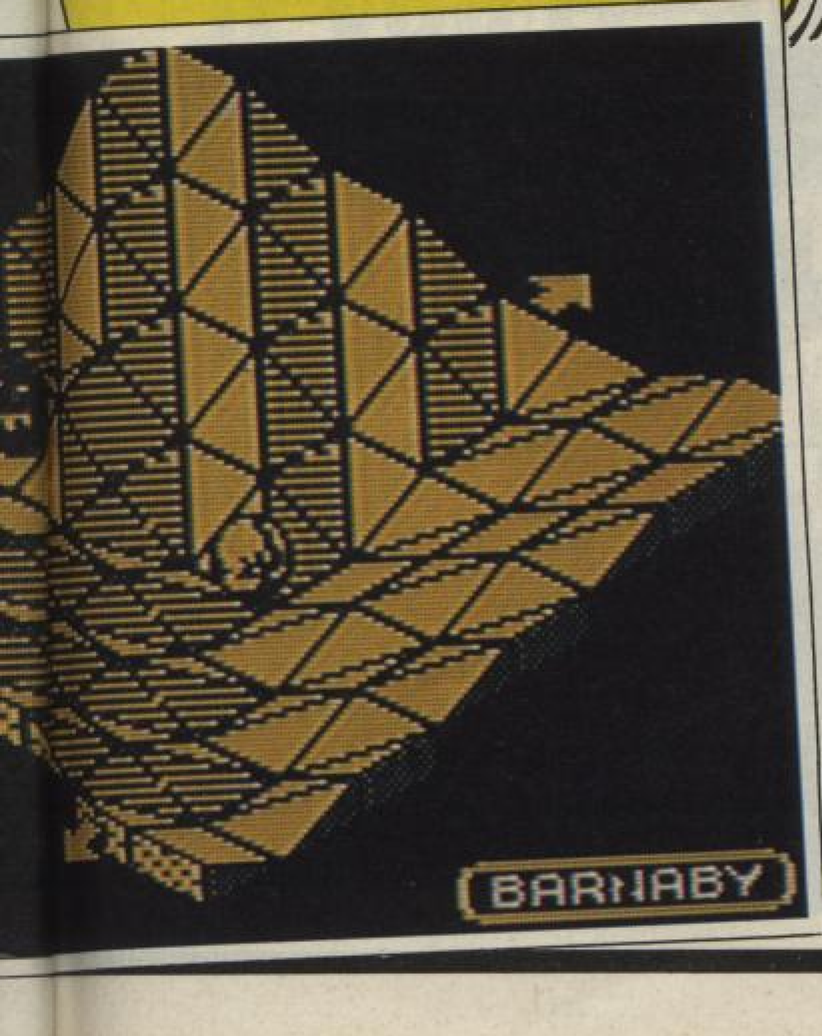
IF I LOOKED SUCH A SILLY BOBBY BALL...'



Squish! Bobby the pancake doesn't look too healthy at the moment. But then, who would after being crushed under ten tons of metal? . . .



BANG! goes the evil black bearing as he bashes into Bobby. Zzzz goes Bobby as he tries to get his scrambled brains into gear



Enter Bobby Bearing, **the cutest character yet seen on the Commodore 64. This little metallic sphere generates a wonderful personality as he rolls around the Metaplanes in search of his lost brothers. Bobby's animation is brilliant — just watch when he gets squashed or stunned. The way the landscape works is amazing, you really feel the uneven surfaces as Bobby rolls over them and the inertia is just right as he beetles through the many weird and wonderful screens. Though the graphics consist of only two colours, they are really stunning and work really well. The soundtrack is pretty neat too, a little similar to** Thing on a Spring**'s, but it adds atmosphere. The game is difficult, but deserves every bit of perseverance devoted to it. If you want something totally addictive and amazingly playable, go out and get this.**



The land of the Metaplanes is composed of geometric shapes and platforms which are connected by thin catwalks and runways. Evil bearings inhabit certain locations and are eager to dispose of any bearing that happens to stray into their territory. On meeting an evil bearing, Bobby is chased and bumped until he is stunned — whereupon control is temporarily lost and the time limit, shown at the bottom of the screen, counts down very quickly for a few seconds.

I didn't think much of Bobby Bearing **to begin with, it all appeared rather dull, what with scooting around plain areas with little to do. However, after trundling around for a while I discovered that there is a great deal to do. Packed full of humour and 'cute' touches,** Bobby Bearing **now appeals to me immensely. It's a great game which I heartily recommend to anyone who enjoys this type of game.**



Evil bearings aren't the only hazards Bobby will encounter during his travels — the landscape also poses many problems. Some locations feature huge cubes suspended in the air, waiting to squash any unsuspecting bearing that rolls underneath them. In other areas there are impassable blocks which can only be moved by activating switches situated elsewhere on the landscape. And then there are the air ducts which blast Bobby into the air when he travels over them. All these problems — and more — will have to be overcome if Bobby is to find and rescue his brothers.

PRESENTATION 80%
Good on-screen presentation and a keyboard or joystick option.

GRAPHICS 92%
Beautifully drawn but lacking in colour.

SOUND 79%
No spot FX but a jolly tune plays throughout.

HOOKABILITY 95%
Instantly appealing but occasionally frustrating.

LASTABILITY 94%
Perseverance proves highly rewarding.

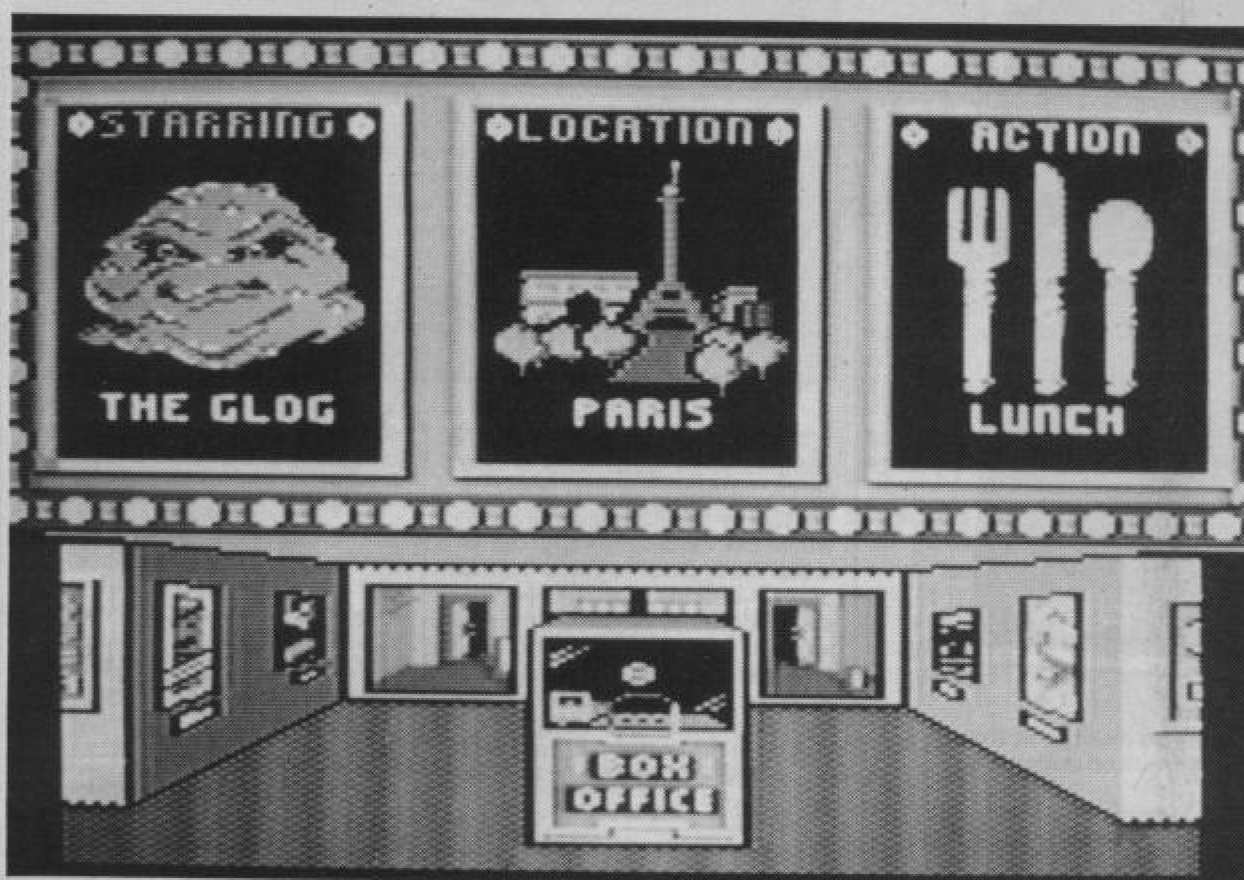
VALUE 91%
Lots of challenge for your money.

OVERALL 93%
An exceptionally cute and playable exploration game.



MOVIE MONSTER

US Gold/Epyx, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick only



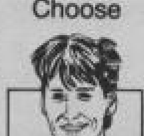
Fed up of being a puny seven stone weakling and having sand kicked in your face by some musclebound bully? Well now's the chance to get your own back . . . by playing **The Movie Monster Game**. Step into the skin of one of six huge, mutated monsters and wreak havoc in one of six famous cities — London, Paris, New York, San Francisco, Moscow or Tokyo.

Choose your monster from Godzilla, a tall fire-breathing reptile; the fat stomping Mr Meringue; a giant wasp called Sphectra; The Glog, a giant radioactive blob; Tarantus, a huge mutated arachnid, and a giant renegade robot that goes by the name of Mechatron. All of them have special characteristics — some can walk through water, others are immensely strong and some have the ability to freeze everything with a single piercing scream. It's up to you to decide which monster best suits your playing style.

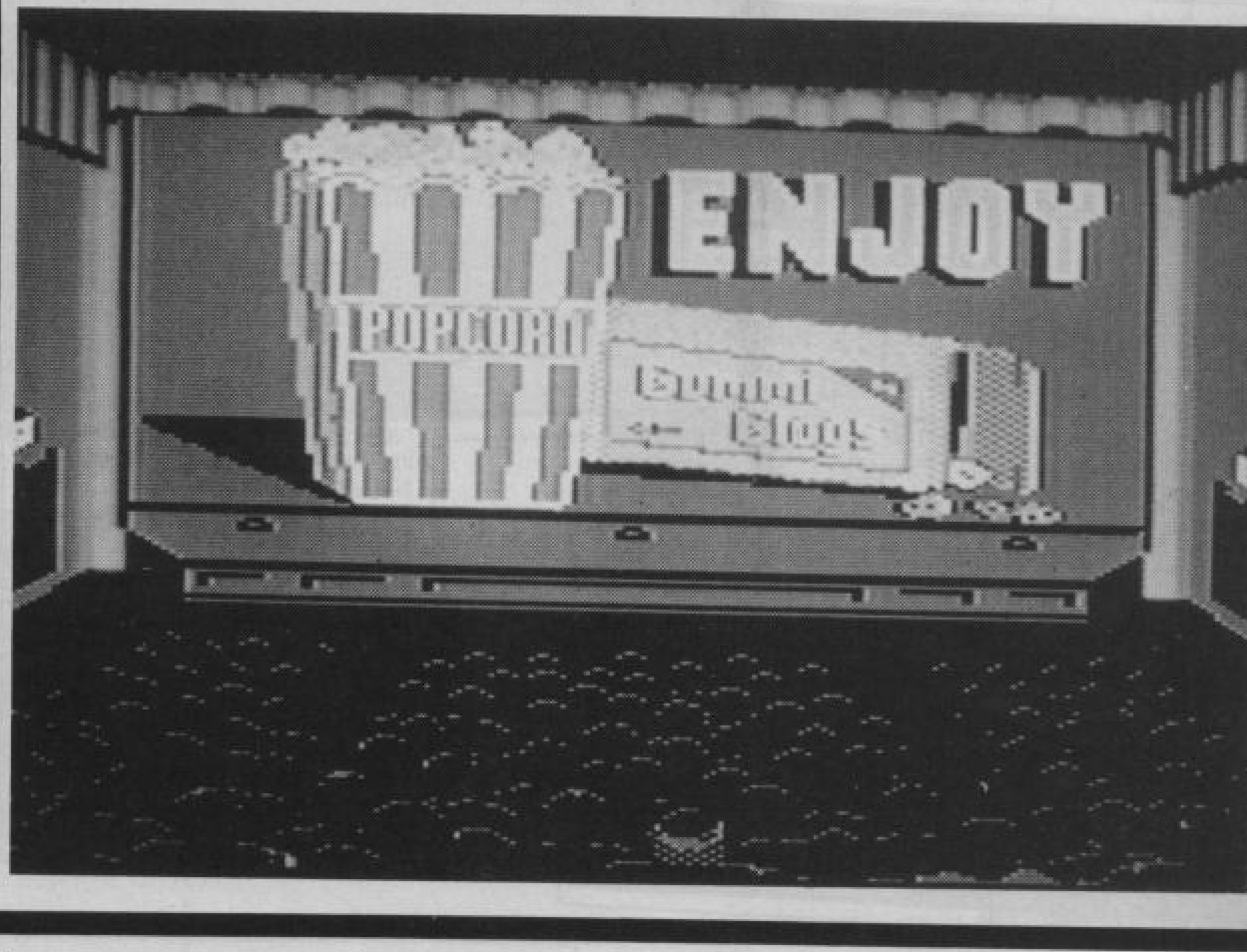
Five different scenarios are provided: Destroy Landmark; Escape; Lunch; Berserk and Search. Each has a different objective. In Escape you have to try to get out of the city before the army destroys you. Berserk has you smashing down as many buildings and stomping on as many people and vehicles as possible. Lunch is where you have to eat as much as possible (*ahh the good old days of Gary Liddon* **—ED**). In Destroy Landmark you have to kick down a specified famous building while Search sets you on the trail of your baby who's hidden under one of the buildings in



I was expecting great things from this game but it's turned out to be a disappointment. Running amok in one of six cities, demolishing buildings and crushing people and vehicles underfoot is fun for an hour or so, but due to the slow pace of the game I soon lost interest. Movie Monster **should have been fast, frantic and more action packed, but it isn't. It strikes me as being more of a simulation than a playable arcade game, which is a shame as the potential for a brilliant game has been wasted.**



This is a fun game which is really enjoyable to play for a short while. After playing through the six scenarios, frustration sets in — you can't really have a very long game and always have to make your way out of the city after a very short period of playing. It's brilliant fun stomping on tanks and kicking in skyscrapers, so why limit the gameplay? It would have been miles better if they'd given you three monsters so you could play it more like an arcade game. The graphics are pretty decent — some of the monster sprites are really great — and the sound is fine. Give it a try if the idea sounds appealing, otherwise wait until someone converts the arcade game Rampage.





the city.

Once the selections have been made, the scene switches to the inside of a cinema. The lights fade, a brief set of instructions and an introduction to the forthcoming action appears on the 'cinema' screen. The game begins. Your monster appears in the middle of the main display area and the landscape scrolls around him as the joystick is moved.

The status area under the main playscreen reveals the score and game time elapsed. Next to these readouts, the monster's endurance level is shown as a bar that diminishes to a fatal zero as the army's bullets and missiles land home. The endurance bar increases if the monster manages to remain unscathed for a period of time, although the speed of the recovery depends on the monster selected.

The action icon shows the specialised action currently selected (pressing the space bar cycles through the monster's capabilities). Some of these actions include spin web (Tarantus), spew fire/laser, scream and atomize up (essential if you are to destroy helicopters and jets). Pressing the fire button activates the selected mode, although using it too much can tire the monster out. If you're playing Lunch, a hunger indicator diminishes if you don't eat and a proximity indicator appears during Search and Destroy Landmark.

Each city is surrounded by an invisible boundary and when you reach it you're asked if you want to leave the city. Leaving a city causes the scene to revert back to the cinema screen, which displays a text conclusion to your adventure along with your score, and the rampage comes to a swift end. If you don't leave the city you can go back and romp about a bit more, but keep an eye on your endurance. Monsters may be tuff, but they get tired too . . .



This is what I've been waiting to see for quite some time. None of your namby pamby saving the universe lark here, just good old fashioned violence. Stomp, crush, smash, scream — all great fun . . . for a few games. Then it seems to wear off. After all, there's only so much building stomping you can do in a lifetime. The graphics are fun, the sound is adequate, but overall I don't think you'll play this too often.

PRESENTATION 83%
Awkward loading system, but well presented with plenty of options.

GRAPHICS 81%
Neat monster sprites and convincing, but repetitive backdrops.

SOUND 75%
Numerous simple tunes and suitable stompy spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 84%
Initially great fun stomping everything into the ground . . .

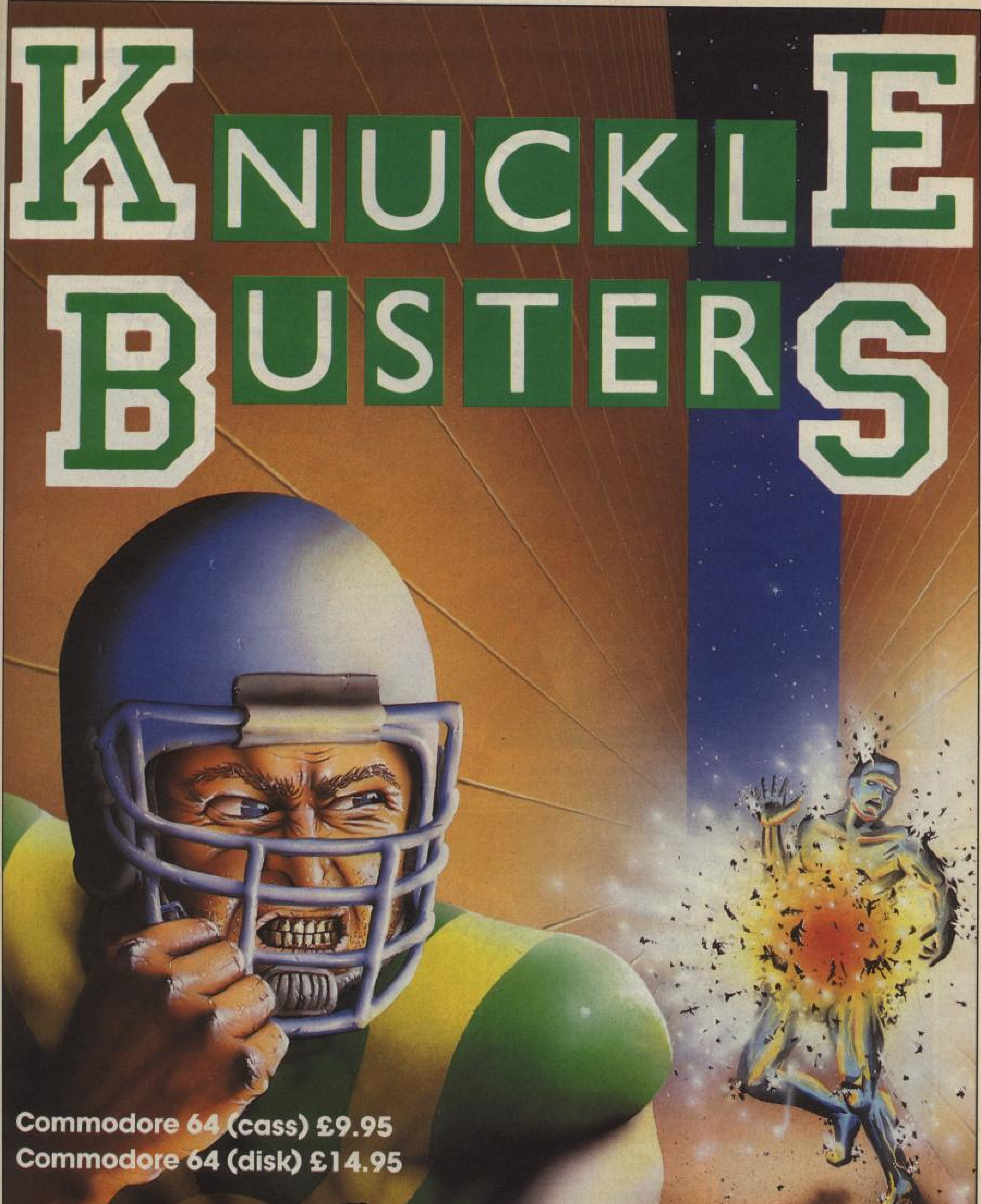
LASTABILITY 65%
But the limited gameplay palls after a while.

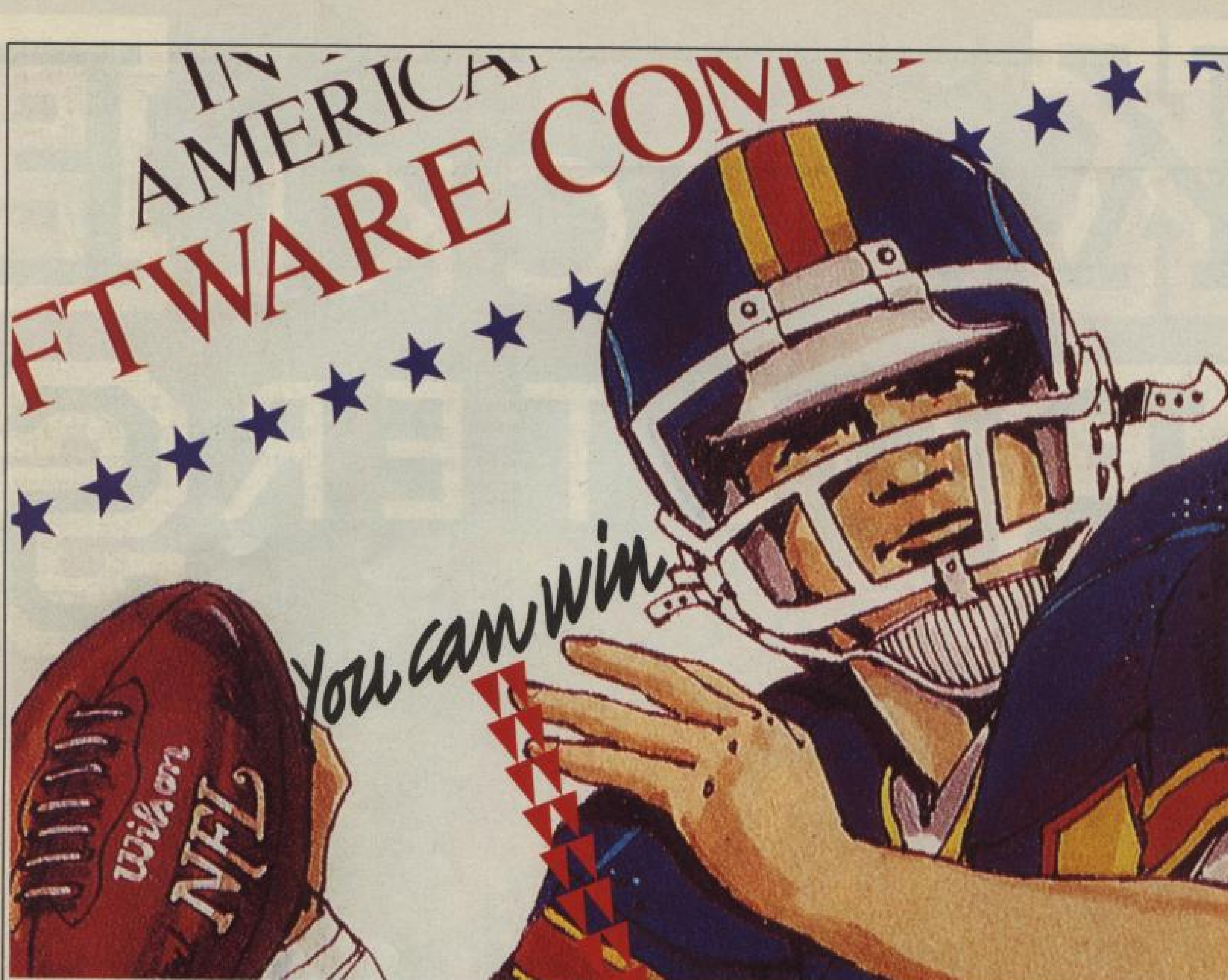
VALUE 69%
Expensive when you consider the limited gameplay.

OVERALL 75%
A brilliant idea which should have made a better game.




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Subject to availability.

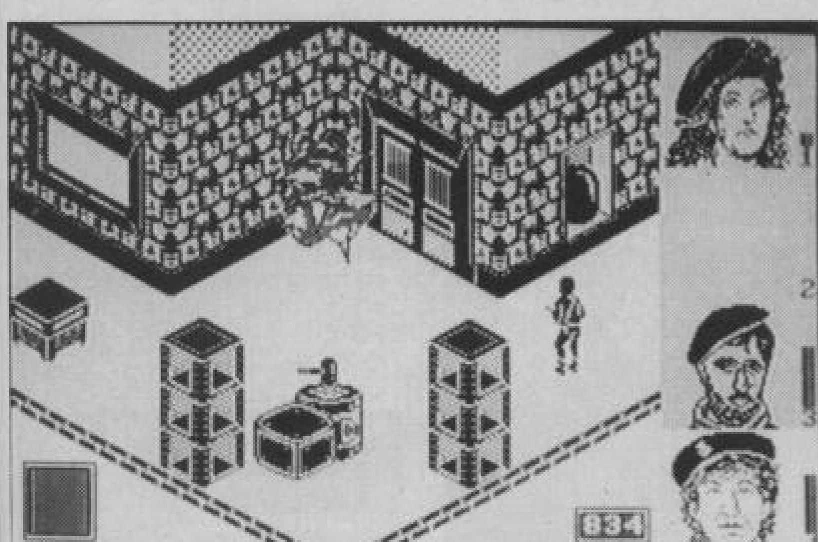
STRIKE FORCE COBRA

Piranha, £9.95 cass, joystick with keys

The world is under threat again, not by some extraterrestrial force, but by a fellow human being. This vile individual, known only as The Enemy, is threatening civilization with a nuclear holocaust unless it yields to his demand that he become President of the World. You see, this demented chappie is rather good at the hacking game and has broken into defence computers all over the world and left a small, but powerful program. If his demands aren't met, or he's killed and his password not input into the program, a massive nuclear strike will be launched to targets all over the world.

Naturally this sort of lunacy has to be stopped, so an elite fighting force consisting of the cream of the world's special forces have been assembled into an eight strong commando unit, codenamed COBRA. What this team has to do is penetrate The Enemy's fortress and blow up his giant computer.

First, they have to rescue the scientists whom The Enemy is holding captive (if they don't help him they get horribly tortured). Each scientist knows one digit of the password which they will gladly tell if rescued. This



password, when assembled, disables the missile launch program. Once the program has been disabled the computer can then be blown up and the world will be safe.

The Enemy's fortress has four levels, all heavily armed with automatic weapons systems, electronic traps, killer robots and human guards. Once an alarm is set off the main computer begins the countdown for the nuclear launch, effectively giving the game a time limit. There are mini terminals dotted around the fortress which, if destroyed, slow the countdown, thus giving you more time to complete the mission.



Although the pace is slow and there isn't a great deal of fast action, I found Strike Force Cobra **rather absorbing to play. It's no graphical marvel and does slow down quite drastically at times, but on the whole it plays quite well and offers plenty of challenge if you're willing to persevere. My only major gripe with this game is the lack of sound — some quality interactive music would have created a decent atmosphere.** Strike Force Cobra **is far from outstanding and I wouldn't regard it as an essential purchase, but it's worth a look if you want to try something different.**

To crack the computer password you have to use your Digital Lock Breaker which is also vital to get through the doors of the main computer room. You'll also need to aquire at least six of the nine digits to stand a chance of cracking the password.

When the game starts you're asked to select an assault team of four from the eight recruits provided. These four must be used as a team if you are to succeed in your world-saving task. You can only control one member of the team at a time, so careful planning and a little strategy is needed. Each member of the team starts off in a different position around the fortress and can either try to penetrate the defences alone or find one another and work together.

Each member of the Cobra team comes armed with a sub-machine gun and electromagnetic flux grenades (which destroy or confuse electronic equipment). The commandos are also agile little devils and can be made to dive through windows, kick in doors and jump or even crawl through tiny gaps.

Despite being protected by armour, if a team member receives too many hits he will die. You are made aware of their status by means of a bar chart which appears in their icon, and as hits are sustained the bar chart diminishes until it reaches a fatal zero. If a team member is looking a bit unhealthy you can search for one of the first aid posts located around the fortress which replace the lost energy.

Not all the doors and windows yield to a good welly with a hobnail, some need to be switched on by jumping onto pressure pads located elsewhere around the complex. There are also lifts to the different levels of the fortress which are controlled by switching consoles in other rooms — you'll just have to learn which consoles control which lifts.



Strike Force Cobra **is a most unusual game for the 64, it actually looks more like a Spectrum game. Unfortunately I can't really see many 64 owners getting into it with the knowledge that it could look and sound a great deal better. As a game concept it's quite adventurous, theoretically it could have worked well, but sadly it hasn't. If you want to try something different it might be worth checking this out, otherwise save your pennies.**





I didn't like playing this much. For a start, the keyboard controls are a real pain. Surely the programmers could have better use of the joystick? The instructions aren't particularly informative, and it takes quite a few games before you can get a real grip on the situation and work out what should happen when and where. The graphics don't help either, sometimes it's very difficult to work out exactly what's going on. It's a shame really, Strike Force Cobra **is a nice idea but it's let down by too many flaws.**

PRESENTATION 79%
Rather awkward keyboard controls, but the LOAD/SAVE option is useful.

GRAPHICS 72%
The characters are sometimes unclear and slow down considerably when several things are on screen.

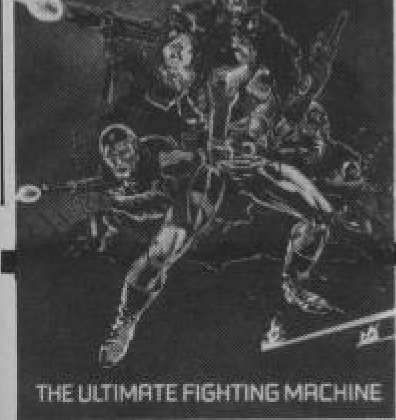
SOUND 18%
A few very simple spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 60%
Difficult to get into due to the over-complicated controls and tricky gameplay.

LASTABILITY 71%
Plenty there for those who are willing to persevere.

VALUE 62%
Nothing special for ten quid.

OVERALL 68%
A nice idea which hasn't quite worked in practice.



ZZAP! TEST

SOLDIER ONE

American Action/Greve Graphics, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick only

Standing on a podium, your 'Hardest Soldier in the Commandos 1986' award gripped in your hand, you're thinking of what to say in the thank you speech, when all of a sudden a Commander rushes in looking a little flushed. He explains that a small island has been taken over by an evil megalomaniac General who has to be stopped before he does any more damage. The only way that can be done is for one soldier to go in alone, penetrate the general's newly formed defence system and destroy his stronghold. The hardest man the Commandos is the logical choice for this perilous mission. So, tossing the shiny award to one side and grabbing a gun, you rush down to the nearby quayside and jump into a handy boat.

Soldier One is a seven screen shoot em up in which an island has to be approached by sea, a beach stormed and the General's stronghold destroyed. Single handed. The first screen depicts the perilous approach to the island. Sitting in your Acme Commando Assault Craft, you spot a fleet of torpedo boats approaching and they're lobbing missiles. Luckily, you've brought along an Acme Anti-Torpedo-Boat gun which can be used to repel those pesky ships. The gun is moved left and right with the joystick while up and down adjusts the elevation. The fire button launches an Acme Anti-Torpedo-Boat Missile. If an enemy missile hits home, some energy is lost and the bar at the bottom of the screen shrinks towards a fatal zero.

The second screen sees the arrival of the General's backup fleet. This lot fire more accurate shots but can be disposed of in similar fashion to the torpedo boats — faster work is called for to avoid energy being entirely depleted. The third screen presents a view of the island with its three gun batteries and a warship blocking the entry to the harbour. Using the same gun and control method, the enemy forces must be taken out before the energy bar reaches the zero mark.

If the island's gun batteries have been avoided successfully, an aerial view of the beach and your boat pops up. Time to unload the Acme Beach Assault Craft and sail to the beach without being hit by fire from the beach machine gun emplacements. Each time you're hit energy is lost and the craft has to start the journey from the ship to the beach all over again.

Once that problem has been negotiated, the beach must be stormed and your position consolidated. Gripping an Acme Machine gun, confront the evil General's defence troops as they pop up from behind obstacles and fire at you. Again, finding the right elevation and timing shots is the key to success. The following screen is very similar, only an ambush takes place . . .

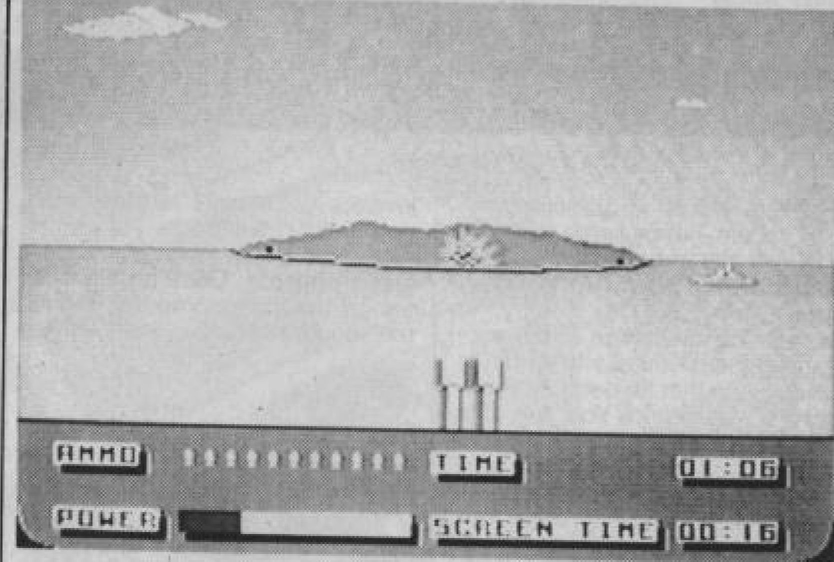
On the final screen the General's fortress must be destroyed by shooting all the soldiers as they pop up from behind the stronghold's wall. When all the defenders are dead, the mission is complete.



This is a very simple arcade game which lacks originality, variety, playability and decent graphics and sound. The seven 'different' sections are all quite dull, and I'm surprised American Action bothered to release a game as poor and derivative as this. Ten quid is a lot to pay for an inferior version of Beach Head. **Give it a miss, or if you're desperate get the ageing original.**

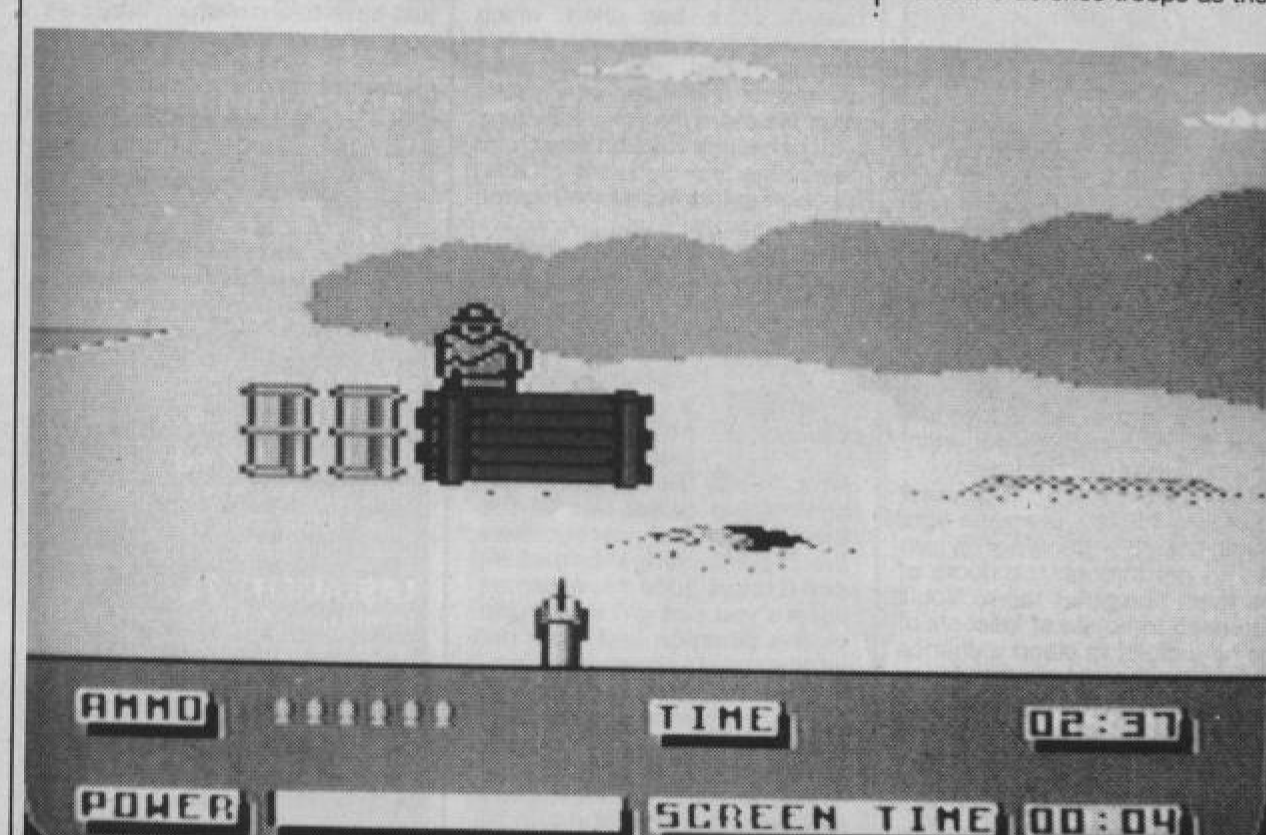


If I wanted to play Beach Head **I would dig it out from my bottom drawer. I wouldn't bother with this.** Soldier One **certainly is a poor product, offering little in the way of excitement or entertainment. Everything in it appears dated: the playability, the graphics and the sound — absolutely nothing to make you return to the game. Even if you did enjoy similar games don't feel upset if you miss this.**





This unmitigated Beach Head **rip-off boasts 'stunning graphics' and reckons it is 'entertainment at its best' on the inlay. Unfortunately this is far from the truth. The graphics are very reminiscent of the ancient Access game and when compared with today's standards, they don't really stand up. The gameplay is less varied than** Beach Head **and for ten quid there are plenty of games which offer far more, and provide lasting entertainment. Quite simply, avoid it.**



PRESENTATION 67%
Title screen and hi-score table, but no game options.

GRAPHICS 54%
Ancient looking, but clear and functional nevertheless.

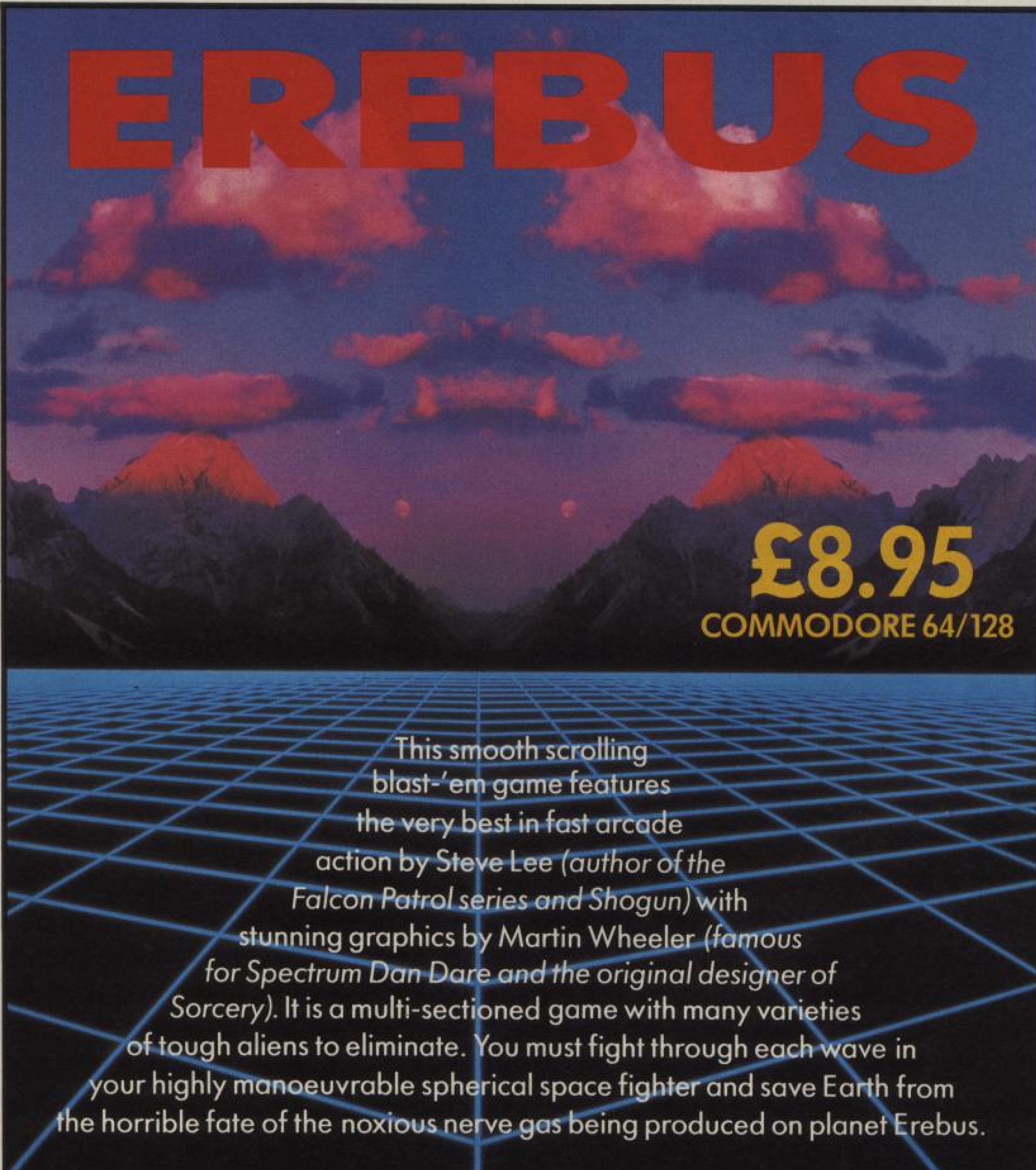
SOUND 61%
Reasonable title screen music, jingles and spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 42%
Might provide initial interest if you haven't played **Beach Head**.

LASTABILITY 31%
The game is quite easy to finish and there's nothing special to keep you coming back.

VALUE 30%
Expensive for what's on offer.

OVERALL 35%
A dull and archaic seven screen shoot em up.



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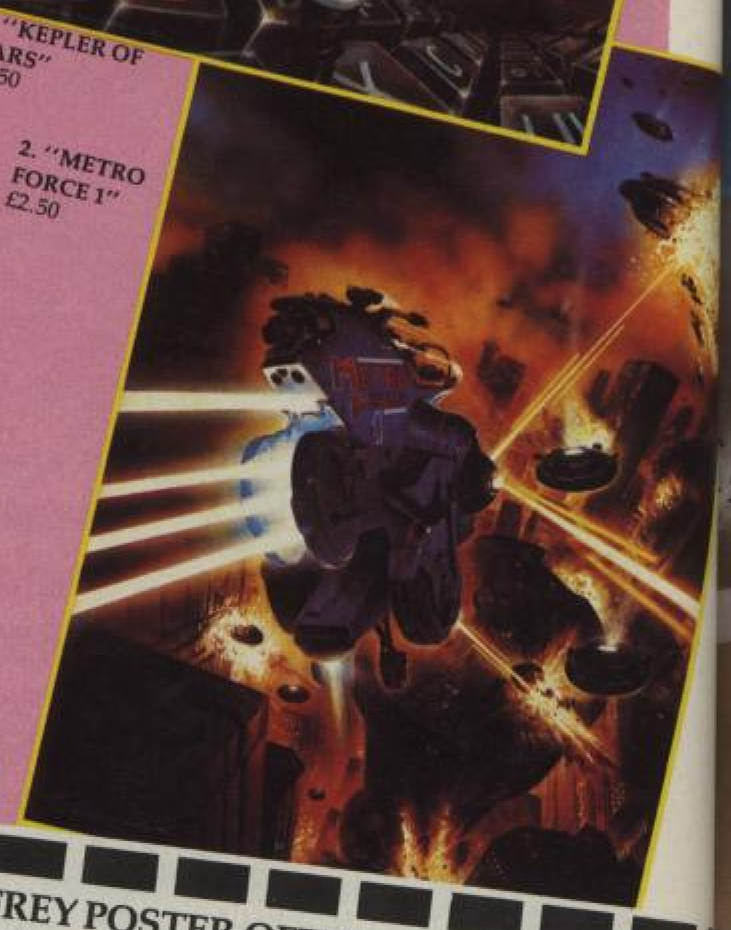
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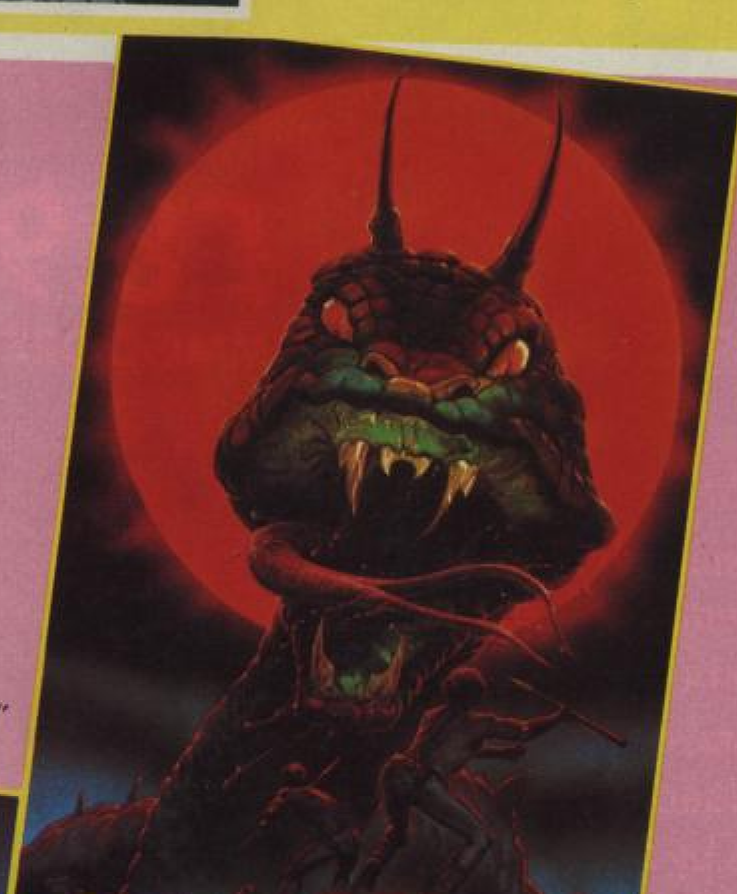
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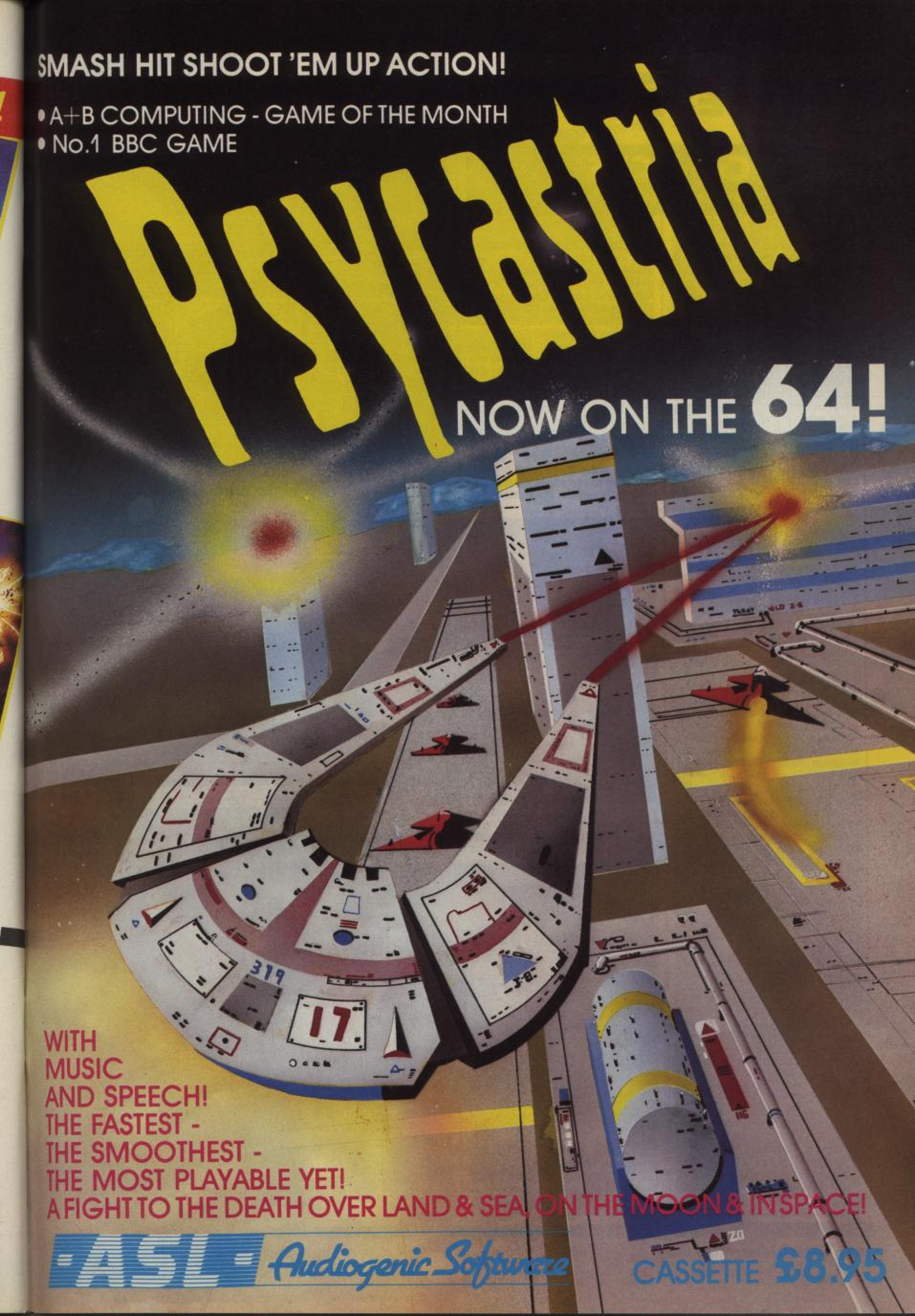
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ACE OF ACES

US Gold, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick only

The Mosquito, affectionately dubbed by pilots as the 'Wooden Wonder', was one of the unsung heroes of World War Two. It didn't come into regular service until after the Battle of Britain, but it made many vital night and daytime raids over Germany during the latter stages of the war. Comprising of wooden fuselages and powered by twin Rolls Royce Merlin engines, the Mosquito was capable of attaining fast speeds while maintaining its incredible aerial manoeuvrability.

Ace of Aces attempts to emulate the thrill of flying a wartime raid over Germany, not as a traditional flight simulator but as an arcade style simulator which simplifies the aeroplane controls. It concentrates more on the completion of various missions than continually adjusting flight controls.

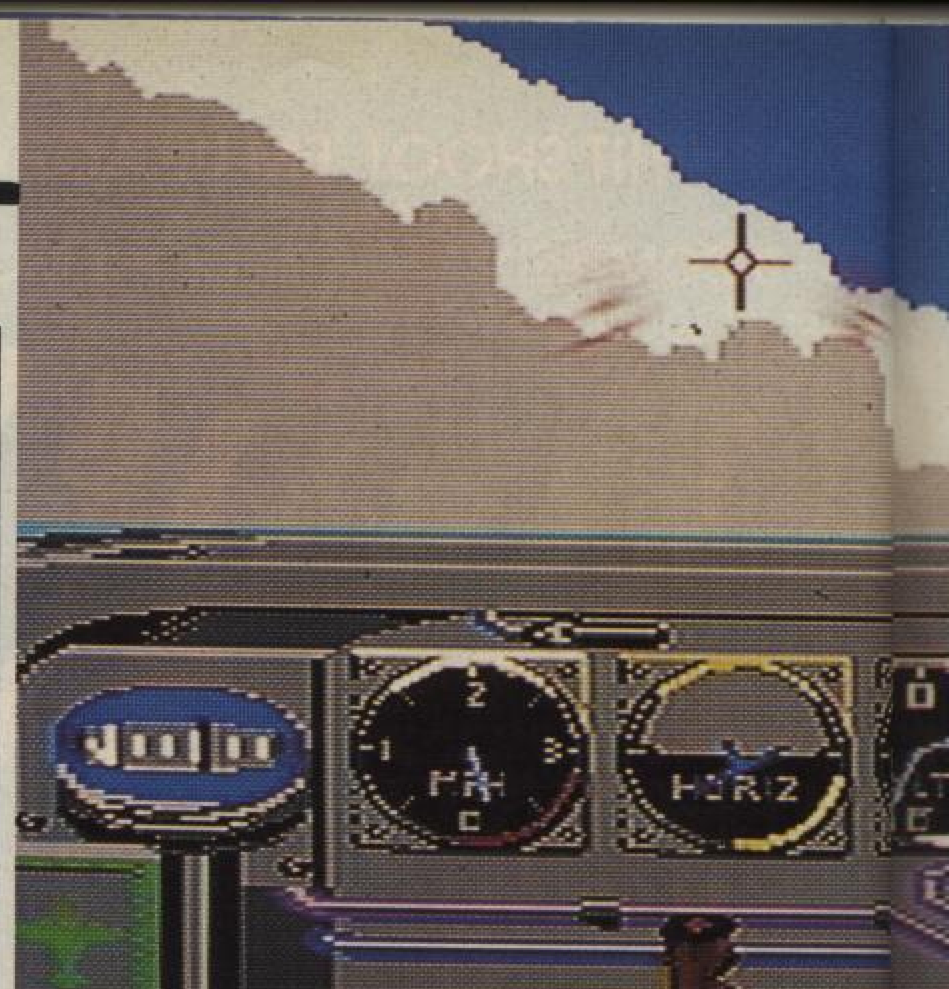
When the game is first loaded a menu screen is presented, allowing you to practice or undertake a proper mission. Selecting the practice option allows you to take part in a dog fight or undertake either a train or U-boat bombing mission. Enemy fighters are less hostile and appear less frequently in the practice mode, allowing you to get the general feel of the plane and its control system.

By pressing certain keys on the keyboard or quickly pressing the fire button twice and moving the joystick in the relevant direction, one of five different views from the plane can be accessed: the cockpit, the left or right wing, the bomb bay or the navigator's map.

Selecting one of these views allows various controls to be altered, done by moving a small cursor to the required instrument, holding down the fire button and



Ace of Aces **is the best factual war simulation I've seen.** Dambusters **looked impressive but was let down by its playability and** Desert Fox **was, at times, a little unbelievable. Accolade seem to have got the balance right with this and have produced a brilliant game which offers wonderful atmosphere and plenty of playability. I've always been interested in the history behind the 'Wooden Wonder' and consequently played this in the hope that it might offer some of the feel of flying a Mosquito during a wartime raid. It does, and it's quite easy to become totally engrossed when playing it, especially when you're chasing after V-1 Buzz bombs or trying to escape the wrath of a group of ME-109's. The graphics are stunning and the effect of flying over the clouds is superb. The interior of the plane is very nicely drawn and the view through the open bomb bay doors when you're over your target is ace. The throbbing sound of the engine is truly stunning — it sounds just like an old propeller aircraft. Some of the other sound effects are a bit on the tinny side though. This is a great program, which won't appeal to the mainstream Commodore owners but should be looked at by anyone who is keen on reliving a Mosquito raid.**



A pilot's eye view of the proceedings



Choosing a mission in the briefing room



Bombs away . . . but wait! That's a POW carriage!





moving the joystick up or down. This control system is used to increase or decrease the speed of the plane, open or close the bomb bay doors, select rockets or guns and jettison the extra fuel tanks — amongst other things.

All five of these control screens must be used in conjuction with each another to help fly the plane and complete a mission. The plane is actually manoeuvred by traditional pilot style joystick control. Pressing the fire button activates either guns or rockets, depending on which weapon is selected.

Once you feel confident enough, you can attempt a proper mission. There are four missions to choose from: V-1 rocket, bomber, train, and U-boat. Any combination of these missions can be undertaken.

The navigation screen





A right wing point of view

In the V-1 mission you have to intercept and shoot down a group of V-1 bombs before they reach their target, which is usually London. The bomber mission runs along similar lines, only you must intercept and destroy a squadron of Junkers JU-88 before they offload their bombs onto some poor unsuspecting British city.

The Train and U-boat missions follow the same format, both requiring a pilot to fly low over a target and bomb it. The train mission is far more precise though, as you have to drop bombs on the correct carriages — some are marked with an iron cross and carry German soldiers, others are marked with a red cross and house POWs.

After a short mission briefing, the plane has to be armed. The screen displays an assortment of weaponry, such as bombs, bullets and rockets, and it's up to you to decide which armament is required. There's also the fuel aspect to worry about: too much weaponry means that fuel is burned faster, so you it's best to carry one or two extra drop tanks and jettison them when they've been used up.

Once that's all settled you can begin the mission proper. You always start from a position above the English Channel and must fly to your target area. A radar is provided along with a map of Western Europe and all its features (including your target), so you can plot a route and see exactly what's going on.

Throughout each mission you will be persued by Messerschmit ME-109 aircraft, which must be shot down. And then there's the added hazard of thunderstorms which are best avoided as lighting strikes can prove highly damaging to the Mosquito.

A mission will only be deemed complete if, once you've destroyed your target, you fly to a position over your airfield. If you finally make it home you are given a summary of your performance and a score for hits on enemy and fuel remaining. You can then enter your name in the hi-score table. If you should fail to complete a mission you are still given a score, but you are unable to enter it on the hi-score table. After all, you're dead!



There is a difficult compromise to be made with flight simulations on home computers. They should be playable and not too complicated. Ace of Aces **is certainly easy enough to play. The graphics are great and there are many neat touches. I particularly like the way enemy planes disappear into the clouds, and being able to look over the two wings and still see targets as they try to get behind you is effective. The controls aren't overly responsive when flying, but then I've never flown a mosquito. The only gripe I have with** Ace of Aces **is that with the amount of control available over the plane it would have been nice if you had to take off and land. Most disappointing. Still,** Ace of Aces **is a highly competent simulation which shouldn't be missed by anyone who likes this type of game.**



Dambusters **was authentic and atmospheric, but it didn't quite achieve the balance between a flight simulation and a playable game as intended.** Ace of Aces **on the other hand, captures both elements effectively and is far more impressive and playable — though the four missions are lacking in content and prove a little monotonous once completed.** If Ace of Aces **offered more of a lasting challenge then it would be brilliant. As it stands . . . well, it's still worthy of consideration, especially if like a decent simulation which isn't too taxing or demanding.**

PRESENTATION 96%
An extremely well thought out program with plenty of options and suitable touches.

GRAPHICS 90%
Detailed screens and convincing flying effect.

SOUND 85%
A couple of reasonable ditties and some great spot FX — especially the engine hum which is incredibly realistic and atmospheric.

HOOKABILITY 90%
Just the thing for non-pilots to get into.

LASTABILITY 84%
Lots to do but it can prove repetitive.

VALUE 85%
Money well spent, especially if you're into militaria.

OVERALL 88%
An excellent program which lacks that little something to make it a classic.



ORPHEUS
IN THE UNDERWORLD
Alpha Omega, £1.99 cass, joystick only

Orpheus is an explorer who is always looking for new challenges. In true James T Kirk style, he spends his time boldly going where no man has gone before. His adventures have taken him far and wide and he's faced many dangers, but his latest escapade is by far his toughest. For some reason he's decided to investigate an old legend and discovered a secret passage into the dark underworld of Hades. Unfortunately the poor fellow didn't know that the secret passage only let people in, not out, and now he's become trapped in a nightmarish world full of demons and strange creatures.

According to the legend the only way to escape from the Underworld is to collect all the treasures scattered about its many locations. Once all the treasures are yours, the magic spell keeping the door shut is broken and you are free to leave.

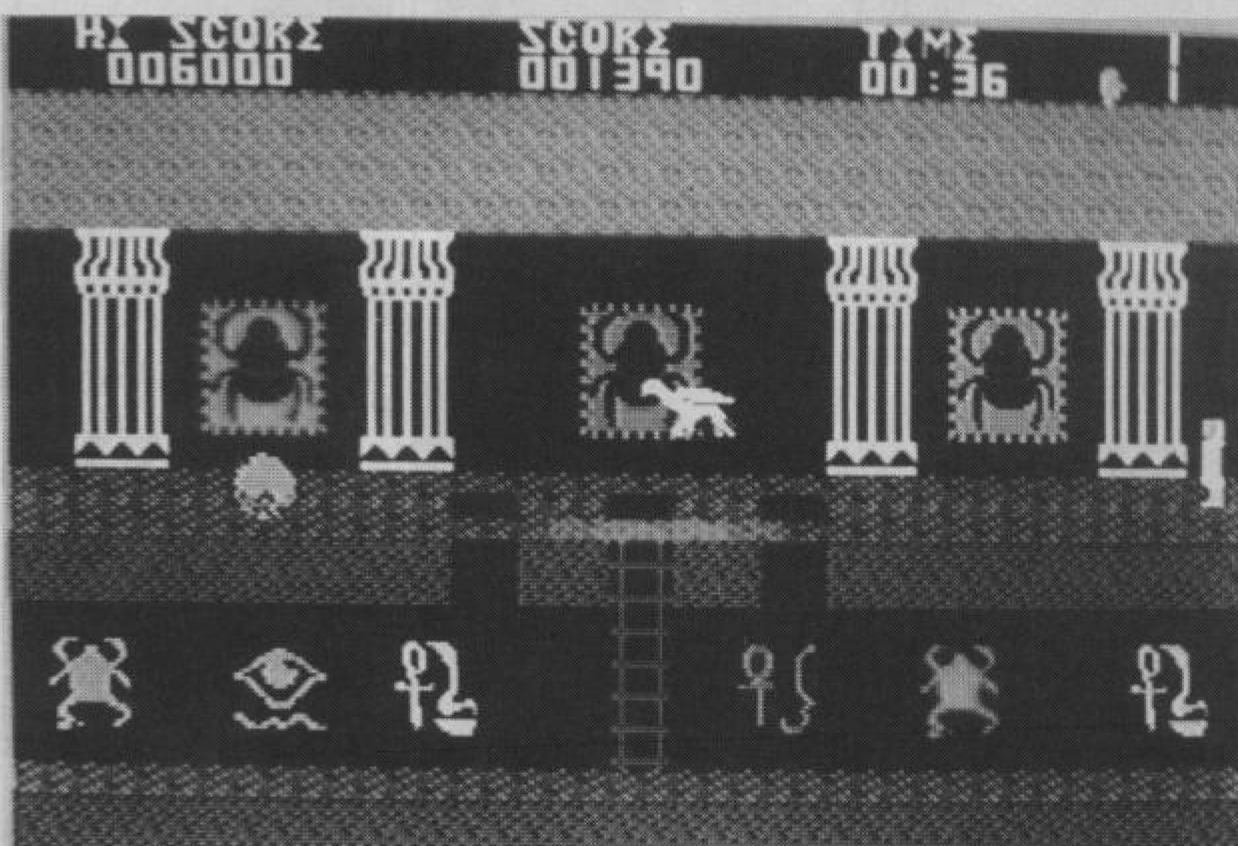
The game is a flick screen arcade adventure in which you have to travel through many screens and pick up the various treasures. There are plenty of hazards to avoid, like gaping pits, magic pools of darkness, holes and underground passages. To add to these there are the vile denizens which always seem to inhabit the underworld. Any contact with a creature or hazard results in the loss of one of Orpheus' three lives, and losing all three means that he's damned to live in the Underworld for eternity.

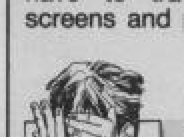


Orpheus in the Underworld was first released as a full priced game nearly two years ago by a company whose name escapes me at the moment, and I didn't think much of it then. Why Alpha Omega have bothered to re-release it, I don't know. Two quid is still asking too much for such a dire game — it's graphically retarded and far too frustrating to be worthwhile.



If this was a decent Pitfall rip off then it wouldn't have been quite so bad. As it stands, it's diabolical. Any initial addiction soon wears off leaving a tedious game that suffers from somewhat difficult gameplay. The music is a bit sad too, it only plays when Orpheus is scampering around. Overall, this game is well up (or down) to the usual standards I have come to expect of Alpha Omega.





This time it's not a tacky flight simulator, it's a Pitfall rip-off, and a completely pathetic one at that. Pitfall is **now years old, but even the original Atari VCS version is better than this. The graphics are feeble, the sprites even worse, and the sound just adds to the tackiness of the whole thing. Do yourself a big favour and don't buy it.**



PRESENTATION 33%
Nothing special.

GRAPHICS 31%
Crude sprites and repetitive backdrops.

SOUND 25%
Dire tunes and spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 29%
Too frustrating to be addictive.

LASTABILITY 16%
And far too tedious to enthral.

VALUE 25%
Poor, even at two quid.

OVERALL 21%
A badly implemented version of an ageing game.

ROBOBOLT
Alpha Omega, £1.99 cass, joystick only

Your mission takes place in a strange corridor in the very depths of a space port. You enter, slightly timid, not knowing what will confront you. The corridor must be shut down before the virus colonies that have taken refuge there infiltrate the entire space port.

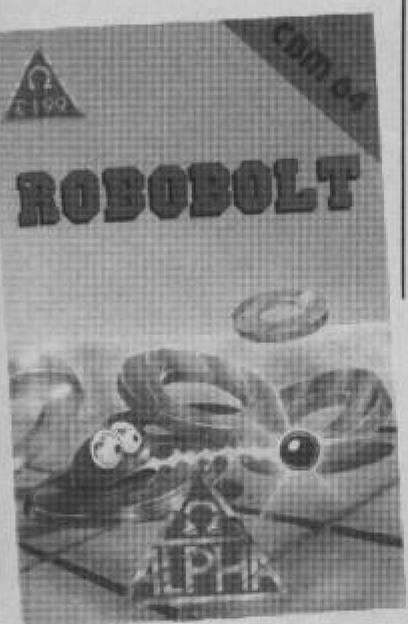
The only solution is to collect four Death Pods — doesn't sound much fun. When the four pods have been collected in the correct order, the corridor disappears and you find yourself in another one. The Death pods take the shape of black or white squares which can be found on the floor. When one is collected a yellow light appears on the status board and you must manoeuvre your Robot along the corridor to locate the assembly unit, marked with blue and white



This is diabolical — even at a budget price it's a poor offering. The graphics are simplistic and very dull, and there's hardly any sound to speak of. The tasks are so incredibly tedious. To be quite honest, I played it for half an hour, got thoroughly bored and threw it away. I just hope it doesn't return . . .

stripes. Plonk the pod in the assembly unit and go an look for the next one . . .

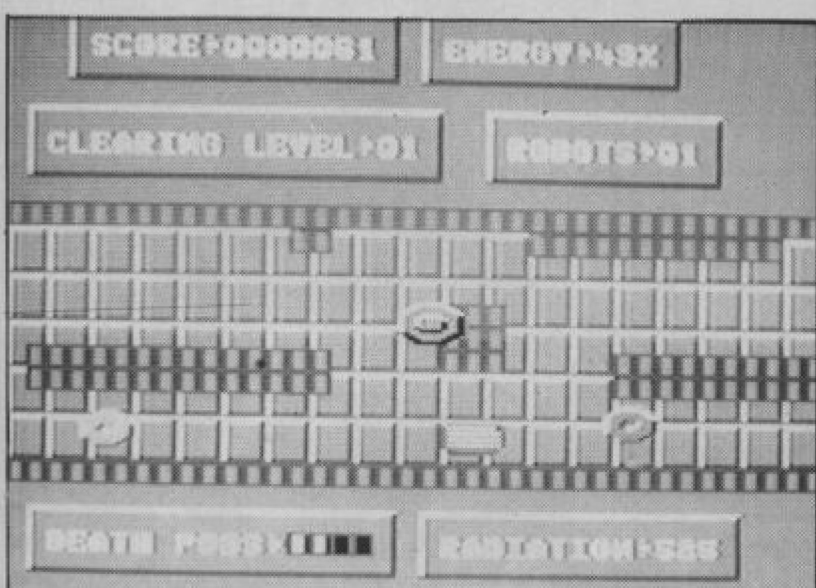
Mobile viruses float around the corridors making your life difficult — each time the droid you control comes into contact with a nasty it loses some radiation energy. Viruses can be zapped with a bolt of



Once the Death Pods have been installed in the assembler, the virus is eliminated in the current corridor and it's through the portal and on to clean up yet another corridor . . .



'I'm sorry, but I have to tell you . . . there's very little hope for your newly purchased game.' 'Are you sure?' **'I'm afraid so. It doesn't look too good. We could barely get a sound out of it, so I think we should . . . '** 'You don't mean! . . .' **'Yes — I hate to say it, but your game is virtually dead. It would be best if we took it off your hands and disposed of it humanely.'** 'I . . . I don't know what to say.' **'Look — a word of advice: the next time you decide to buy a game, take precautions. Use a reliable reference source. Or better still, don't do it unless you are sure it won't result in an unwanted game.'**



energy released by a prod of the fire button in conjunction with a direction. Killing a bug bumps up your energy.



I really can't believe this game. It's just so pathetic, unplayable and boring. This really is the pits of Commodore software. The graphics and sound are instantly forgettable, and as for the the gameplay . . . if you want to torture someone, strap them into a chair and force them to play this! If I was given a choice between playing this again or being injected with Gastro Enteritis, I'd go for the illness every time — it's far more enjoyable and stimulating.

PRESENTATION 41%
Simple title screen and a hi-score table.

GRAPHICS 12%
Severely lacking in variety, quantity and quality.

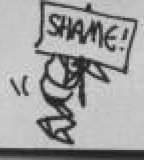
SOUND 13%
Abysmal title screen tune and three simple spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 8%
Once played, best forgotten.

LASTABILITY 2%
Nothing to inspire or enthral for more than a couple of games.

VALUE 5%
Even two quid is asking too much for this drivel.

OVERALL 3%
One consolation: games can't get much worse than this.



EPYX COMPUTER SOFTWARE

CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING™

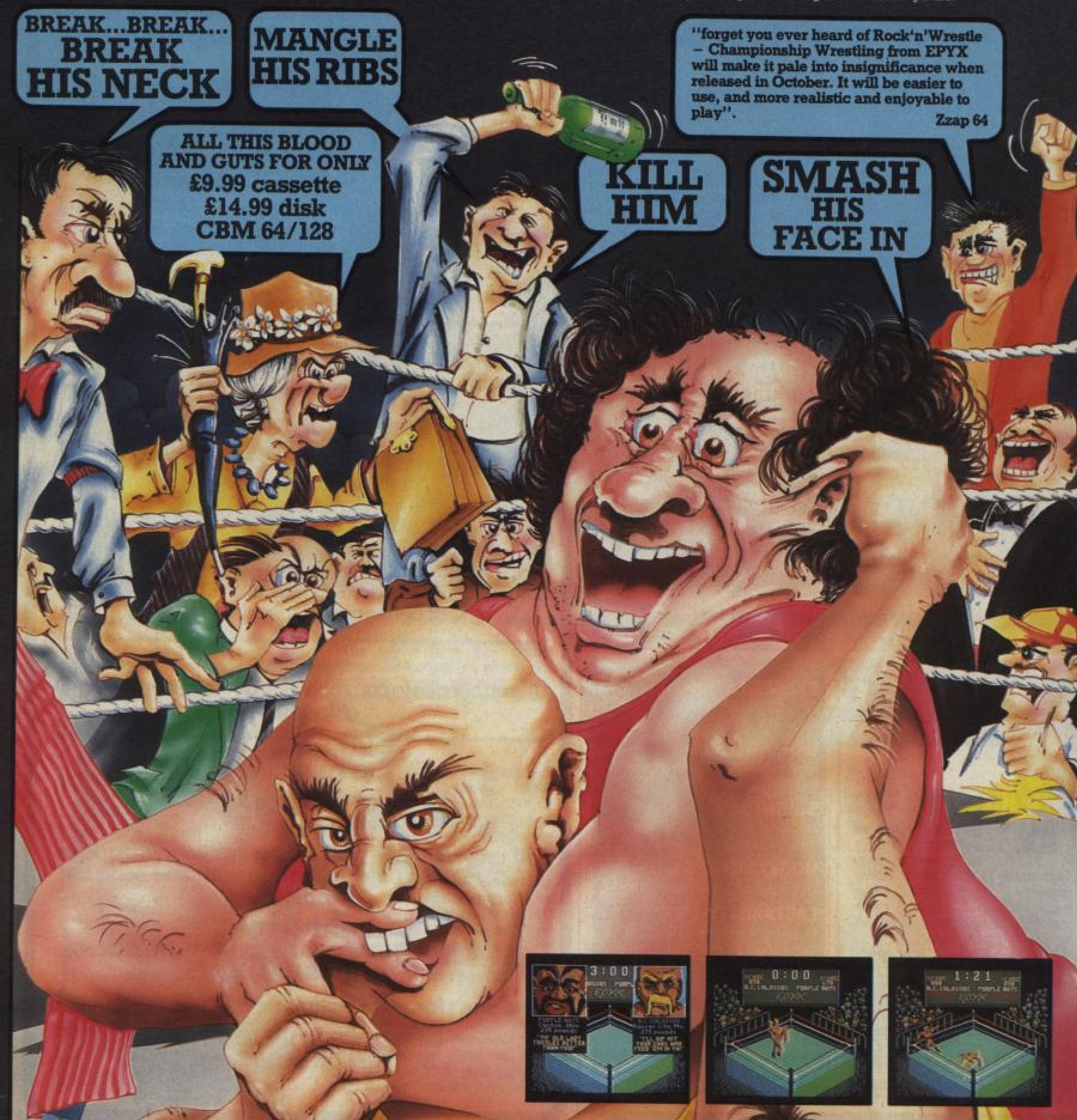
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Use leg drops, spin kicks, body slams, rope bouncing, a flying drop kick, a suplex, an airspin, even the famous atomic drop to mangle those dudes. You'll need over 200 stitches if you don't.

The crowd will cheer. They'll boo. They'll egg you on, or simply throw eggs instead. The scoring is based on the complexity of your moves and, of course, your strength.

And one day, probably long after your poor battered head resembles an overcooked cabbage, you'll be good enough to win the title. And the coveted 'Championship Wrestling Belt' will be yours.

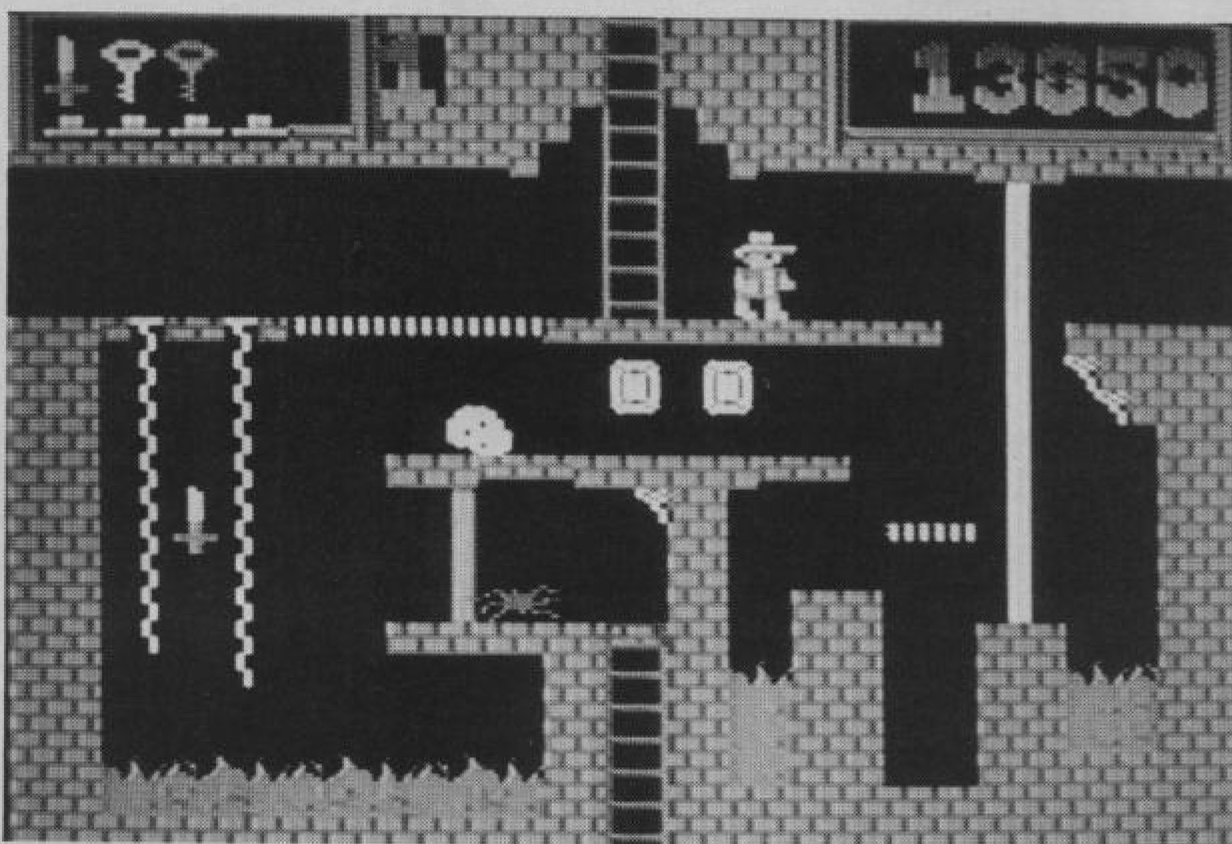


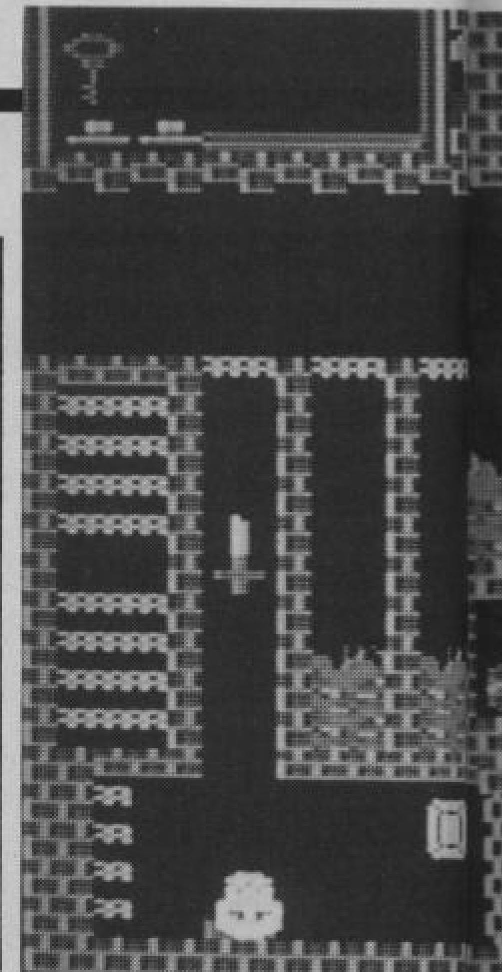
U.S. Gold, Units 2/3, Holford Way, Holford, EPYX® COMPUTER SOFTWARE Birmingham B6 7AX. Tel: 021 356 3388

ZZAP! TEST

MONTEZUMA'S REVENGE

Databyte, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick only





All you ever wanted was to prove that anything Harrison Ford could do, you could do better. And now look where you've ended up. This place is dangerous — but the rewards are great. If you survive . . .

Playing the part of porky Panama Joe (a kind of poor man's version of Indiana Jones), you have to wander around a series of underground caverns collecting valuable jewels while avoiding the members of the monster menagerie that live there.



Montezuma's Revenge **is great fun to play and, as that is the most important aspect of a game, I wish it well. However, it is overly expensive. The game doesn't really warrant a ten pound price tag. At around a fiver, it would represent great value for money. The graphics aren't astounding but they're colourful and fun. Watching Joe get reduced to a puff of smoke is almost worth losing a life for. The sound isn't brilliant either but again, it's fun. The on screen presentation is good and the screen layouts are demanding and imaginative. If it wasn't for the price tag, I'd recommend it without hesitation. As it stands, I recommend caution.**

The caverns are designed so that each 'level' is several screens across. Each screen may or may not offer a way down to a lower level. All of the screens contain some kind of obstacle or a thoroughly unwholesome nasty.

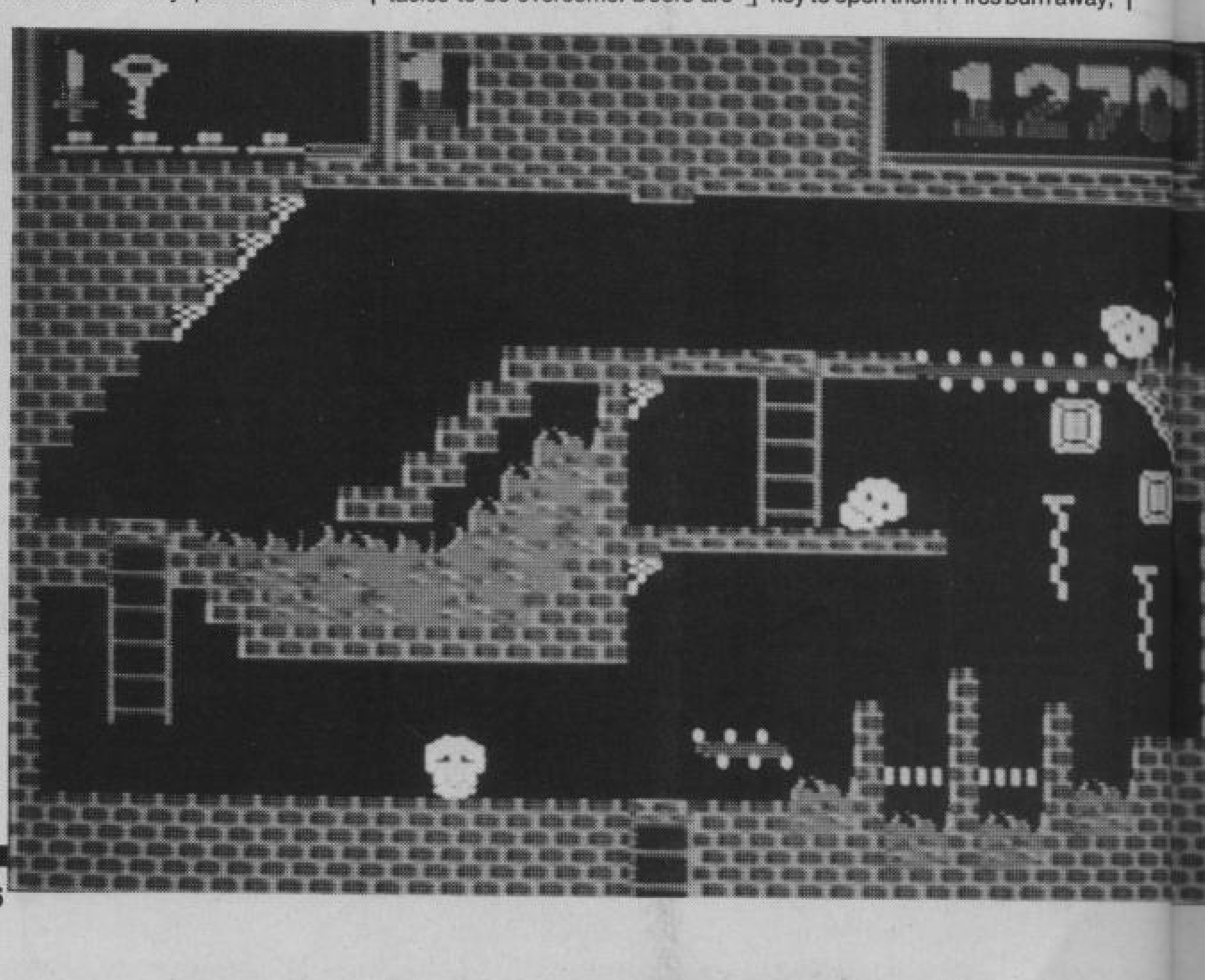
Nasties come in several forms; skulls, spiders and snakes. Only the snakes stay put. Skulls roll around in obscene ecstasy, relishing the prospect of knobbling the odd prospector. Some of them bounce too, in a way only skulls can. Spiders are altogether more gruesome as they can climb or descend ladders within a screen. They're fast too . . .

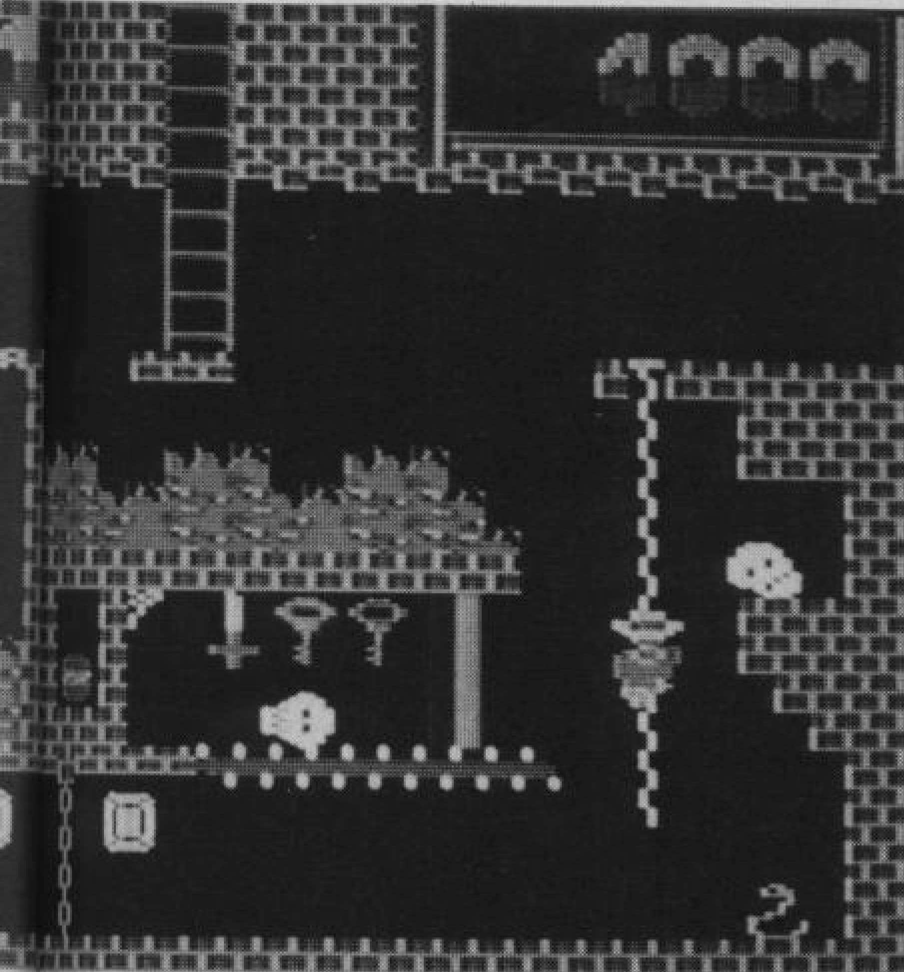
Then, of course, there are obstacles to be overcome. Doors are



Beneath the rather crude exterior of Montezuma's Revenge **there lies a highly playable platform game. It doesn't look or sound like anything special, and certainly isn't original, but it's addictive, challenging and above all, fun. I thoroughly recommend it to anyone who likes a decent platform game.**

colour coded and need the correct key to open them. Fires burn away,



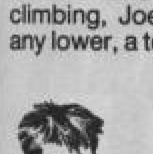


patiently waiting to turn your little character into a rapidly dissipating puff of smoke. Shimmering floorboards are extra deadly: they have a habit of disappearing at the most inopportune moments. Strange energy barriers that switch themselves off and on can only be negated with care. Then the screen may simply be arranged so that it may only be traversed from a particular direction or involve jumping. Despite his ever evident bulk, Panama Joe can jump. But if he falls too far, he lands on his head and loses a life.

Joe has five lives to begin with and these can be protected. He is limited to carrying five objects at any one time and these can include swords and scrolls. Scrolls are rare but, when carried, they make nearby nasties quite harmless. This effect is only temporary. Swords permanently despatch an offensive nasty, but at the cost of one sword per nasty, this is an expensive process. They are best saved for when absolutely necessary.

Eventually, after sliding down poles, climbing and descending ladders and coping with rope climbing, Joe will find that to go any lower, a torch is needed as the levels are suddenly plunged into darkness. Once the torch has been acquired, the journey may continue. The lower levels are more difficult to get through but your efforts are well rewarded at the end. A giant pit, filled with jewels looks most inviting. Sure enough, if you dive in, there are jewels for the taking and no hazards to slow you down. It's best to get as many jewels as possible, as fast as you can. After a short time, Joe lands on a pole and slides back to the beginning. Only this time it's harder . . .

There are three difficulty levels as well. Although the three cavern patterns are almost identical, the optimum route to the final screen is changed. Even if, during the course of a level, all Joe's lives are lost, play may continue with a new set of lives at the cost of the score so far. This may only be done once, however — so keep your eyes peeled!



Montezuma's Revenge is an **oldie, but goodie. The graphics are big and jolly, the sound cheerful and tuneful and the game is FUN. Okay, so the whole thing does look a little on the dated side, but the game is tremendously addictive and dead easy to get into. It is a little overpriced for what it offers, but if you do have a spare tenner floating around (who does?) take a look at it.**

PRESENTATION 69%
A few options but no title screen as such.

GRAPHICS 60%
Poorly drawn and animated, but colourful and quite effective.

SOUND 54%
A couple of jolly ditties and suitable spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 90%
Immediately addictive.

LASTABILITY 82%
Three challenging levels with many different routes to explore.

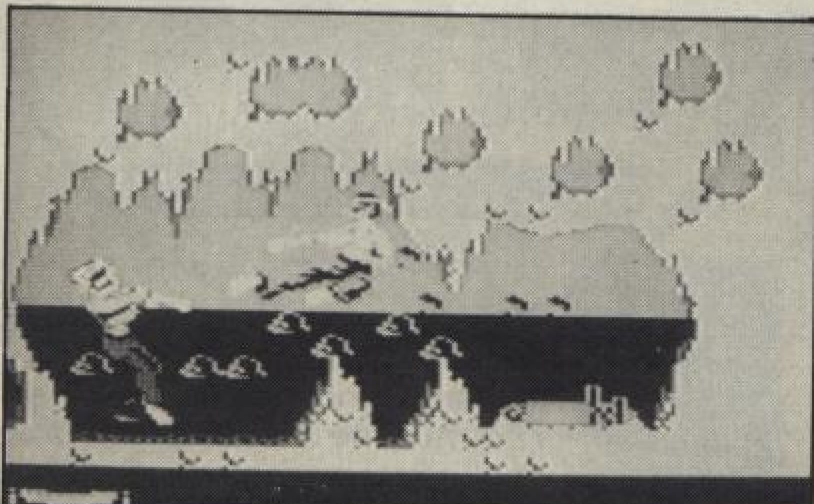
VALUE 77%
Fun, but still overpriced for what's on offer.

OVERALL 83%
A highly playable platform game marred by its price tag.



FIST II
THE LEGEND CONTINUES
Melbourne House, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys

Long, long after the Fist had exploded there came a time of darkness. The Chief Exploding Fist and his warriors were betrayed and overthrown by an evil and deformed Warlord who ruled with a rod of iron from his fortress in a volcano. He was so nasty that he ordered all the temples of the Exploding Fist cult to be razed to the ground. His faithful minions carried out his orders and the scrolls explaining the techniques of the Exploding Fist were lost beneath the rubble.



Over the following years the people became enslaved and any resistance to the Warlord's oppression was swiftly brought to an end. Memories of the legendary Exploding Fist faded, but a few remembered his might and were also aware of the eight ancient scrolls — Trigrams — scattered throughout the land. Once found, these scrolls could provide untold power. But to find them one would have to travel through the Warlord's domain, facing such hazards as his minions, mutated animals, bottomless pits, blackened caverns, walls of fire and choking gases. If only someone was brave enough to travel through the Warlord's domain and find all eight scrolls and absorb their knowledge, then they would become powerful enough to banish the Warlord forever . . .

Fist II is an arcade adventure cum beat em up in which you must make your way through the many scrolling screens of the evil Warlord's domain and recover the eight Trigrams. Once a Trigram has been found it must be taken to its corresponding shrine, where you must meditate to absorb its powers. Doing so also results in an extra life (you start with one).

During your travels you may stumble across one of the evil Warlord's horrible henchmen — which always results in hand to hand combat. Peasant soldiers are the most common of the Warlord's soldiers and are easily



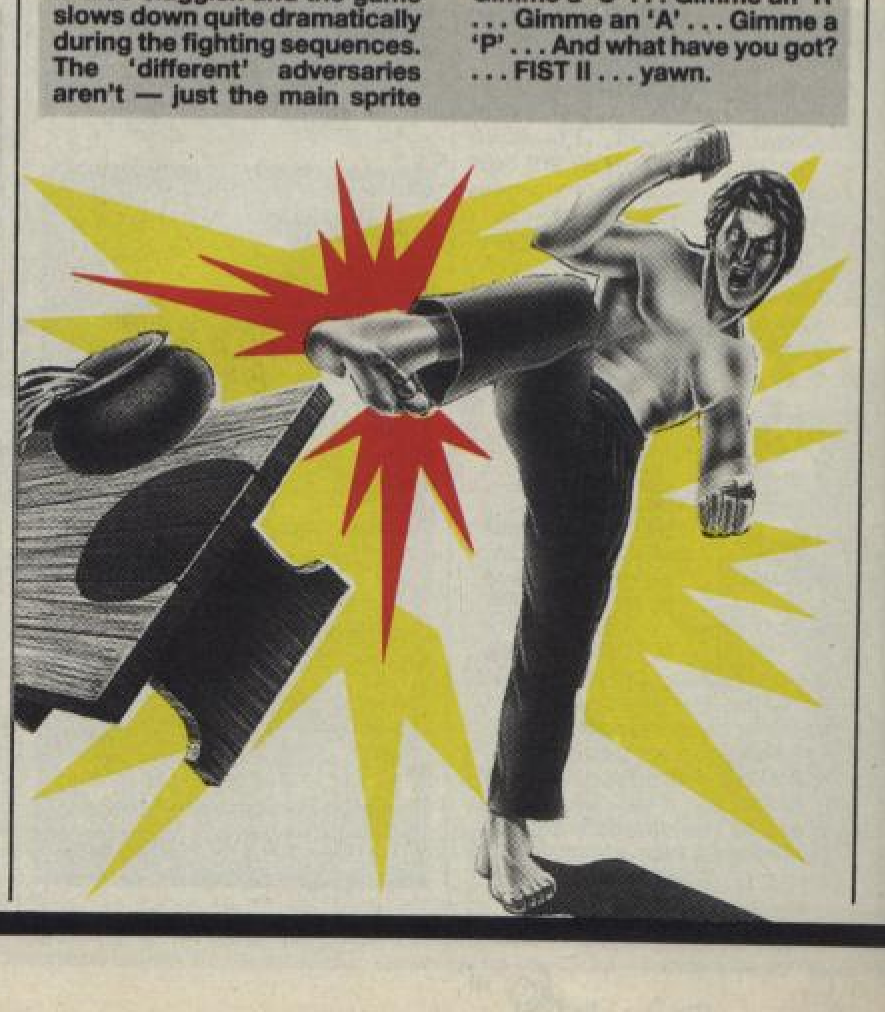
The Legend Continues . . . quite true. But I don't think Joe Public will be talking about Fist II **in the same way that they addressed the original game. In fact, I think Mr Public will feel well upset if he splashes out a tenner of hard earned cash on such a blatantly awful game as this. No doubt the game will sell because of it's name — there's little else for it to fall back on.**

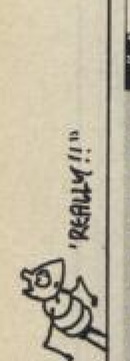


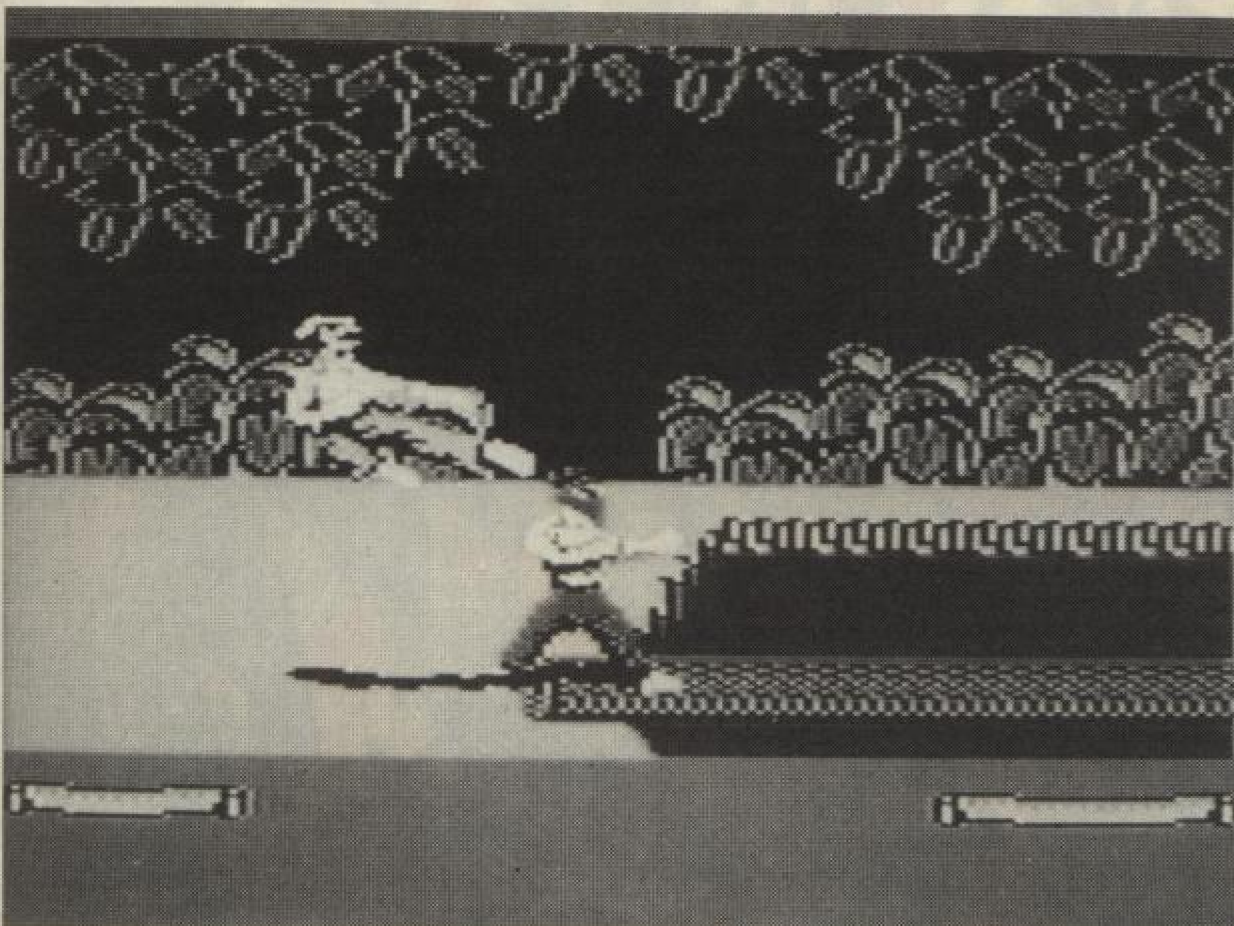
I'm really disappointed with this, it's completely awful. About 90% of the game is spent slowly wandering the locations in search of the Trigrams — there is very little fighting. When you finally meet an opponent your game can finish really quickly if you do a wrong move. Very disheartening, especially after ages of play. Everything is really slow, the fighting, the exploring, the scrolling . . . boredom creeps in after a few goes. The graphics are pretty dull and the sound is pathetic — one 'tune' is about six seconds long before it wraps around, another is ripped out of the disk version of The Hobbit. **As it stands the program looks unfinished and is completely overpriced, even with the free tournament thing on the other side. That's useless too — you can beat all the opponents with one move.**



At last, the eagerly awaited follow up to the best selling Way of the Exploding Fist. **Gosh, I can hardly contain my excitement . . .** Fist II — The Legend Continues **is basically a big disappointment, amongst other big things (like 'job'). There are plenty of locations to explore, but there's very little to do in the meantime — most of the game consists of wandering around doing nothing. On several occasions I spent well over an hour playing and managed to get quite far into the game — only to lose everything when I failed to beat a ninja in hand to hand combat. Very frustrating, even with an extra life or two gained by meditating over a Trigram. The scrolling is a nice idea which doesn't work at all. It proves highly frustrating having to wait for the screen to catch up when you walk away from a fight. The screen judders as it scrolls too, but this isn't really noticeable when you are fighting . . . the huge screen glitch is, though (flicker, flicker).** Fist II **contains a lot of oriental magic, better known as bugs . . . like the samuri who walks out of the water and through the ground. The sprites are chunky and poorly defined, and the animation is slow and jerky. Control is also sluggish and the game slows down quite dramatically during the fighting sequences. The 'different' adversaries aren't — just the main sprite with a new head and different coloured pyjama bottoms. The backdrops are reasonable, but lacking in variety. The various tunes played throughout game are short, simple and annoying, and create a suitable atmosphere. The absence of a title screen and a 'game over' sequence is irritating: when the game ends you simply jump back to the first location with your score zeroed, so there's no chance to see what your previous score was — unless it beat the hi-score. Very shoddy and unprofessional. The tournament version of** Fist **on other side of the tape is also slow and jerky and very dull. Scoring a million points wasn't too difficult — a bit tiring on the hand though. There's no leg sweep 'bug', oh no, this time by continually moving in close to the opposition and using the low punch, it's a doddle to reach 10th dan. It's all very well saying: 'ah, but you should play the game properly', but how can you when the option to 'cheat' is present — it's just so tempting to use. And anyway, a bug such as this just shouldn't exist in a game written by a team of professional programmers. Ah well,** Tournament Fist **is effectively a freebie, so I won't complain too loudly about it. No, instead I'll moan about the quality of** Fist II: **Gimme a 'C' . . . Gimme an 'R' . . . Gimme an 'A' . . . Gimme a 'P' . . . And what have you got? . . . FIST II . . . yawn.**







defeated. Warrior soldiers are difficult to beat, but shouldn't prove too much trouble to a true Fist master. Masked Shoguns are real toughies, but Assassins are by far the most fearful of the Warlord's henchmen.

Whenever a nasty is encountered, seventeen fighting moves become available to you. These can be accessed by moving the joystick in relevant directions, with or without the fire button depressed — a repeat of the system employed in **Way of the Exploding Fist**. To win a fight you must hit your opponent until he runs out of energy and dies, whereupon he shrivels up and disappears. However, if your energy is depleted first and you have no extra lives, then your quest comes to an end.

PRESENTATION 56%
Adequate instructions and good use of joystick, but little else.

GRAPHICS 60%
A veritable oriental Legoland: good, but repetitive backdrops and chunky, poorly animated sprites.

SOUND 48%
A few short and simple ditties play and annoy throughout the game.

HOOKABILITY 40%
Boring after only a few plays.

LASTABILITY 27%
Lots to explore but so little to do.

VALUE 37%
The 'enhanced' version of **Fist** does little to compensate for the poor quality of **Fist II**.

OVERALL 39%
Disappointing and severely lacking in content.

Peter Shilton's



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GRAND SLAM

Can you save the day?

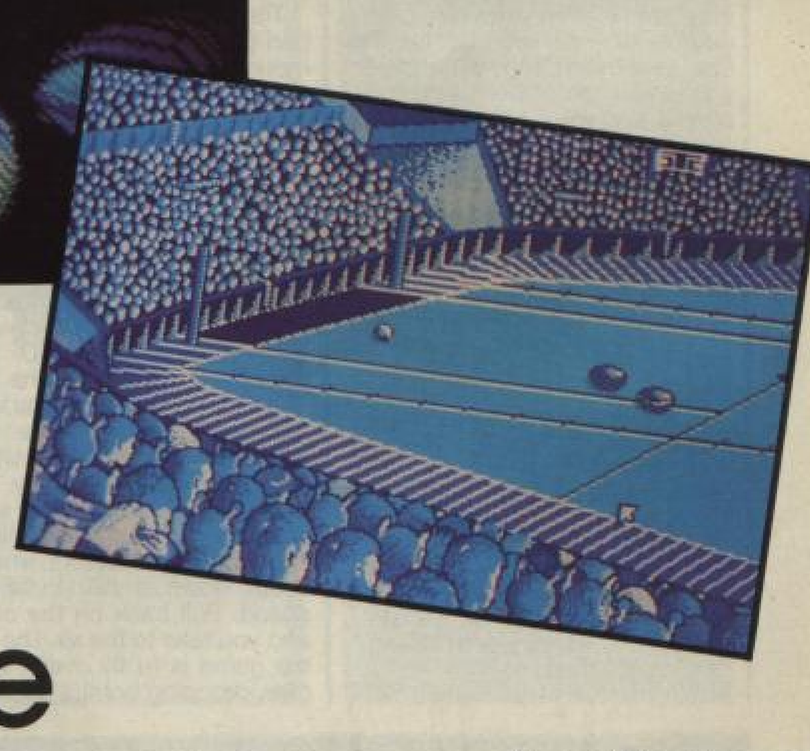
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ZZAP! TEST

GLIDER RIDER

Quicksilva, £8.95 cass, joystick or keys

When you joined the army you never expected to be drafted into the 'Silent But Deadly' squadron — a specialist commando unit that uses motorised hang gliders to travel over targets. Perhaps you shouldn't have shown great aptitude for flying microlites and come out top when you sat your commando exam . . . Over the years you've been on many perilous missions and now you're about to begin your last one. You'd think that after years of service they'd have given you a nice cushy number to finish with, but no, this one is the most dangerous mission you've ever undertaken. Still, complete it and you'll be able to retire with a massive pension — fail and you'll be rewarded with a rather useless posthumous medal . . .

Microlites are small and can fly over a radar station without being detected — and of course their engines can be switched off allowing a silent approach. The deadly bit comes with the release of bombs, carried under the wings of the microlite — this technique of a sneaky and silent approach followed by a deadly attack has given your crack commando squadron its name.

The Abraxas Corporation are the bad guys this time round — their motto is 'arms for anyone, anywhere, any reason, any quantity'. They've been supplying weapons to terrorist groups all over the world and the Powers That Be have decided it's time to put a stop to their nefarious activities. The SBD squadron and you, their number one soldier, have been 'invited' to deal with the situation.

Glider Rider is a flick screen game which uses 3D forced perspective to portray the action. The mission begins as you land on the remote island base of the Abraxas Corporation — which is heavily defended. They make weapons, remember? You start off riding a lightweight motorbike that converts to a microlite when you zoom down a hill, building up speed. Pull back on the controls and you take to the air. The aim of the game is to fly over the complex, dropping bombs on its weak spots.

The landscape includes roadways, open ground, laser emplacements and foliage. Sometimes it's best to ride the bike, other times you need to be in the air. Obviously you can't whizz through trees and the like, but can zip along the roads and through clear patches of countryside quite happily. Controlling the bike is straightforward — it responds to the joystick directions — but in the airborne mode you turn clockwise and anti-clockwise by moving the joystick left and right, and climb and dive by pulling or pushing the stick.

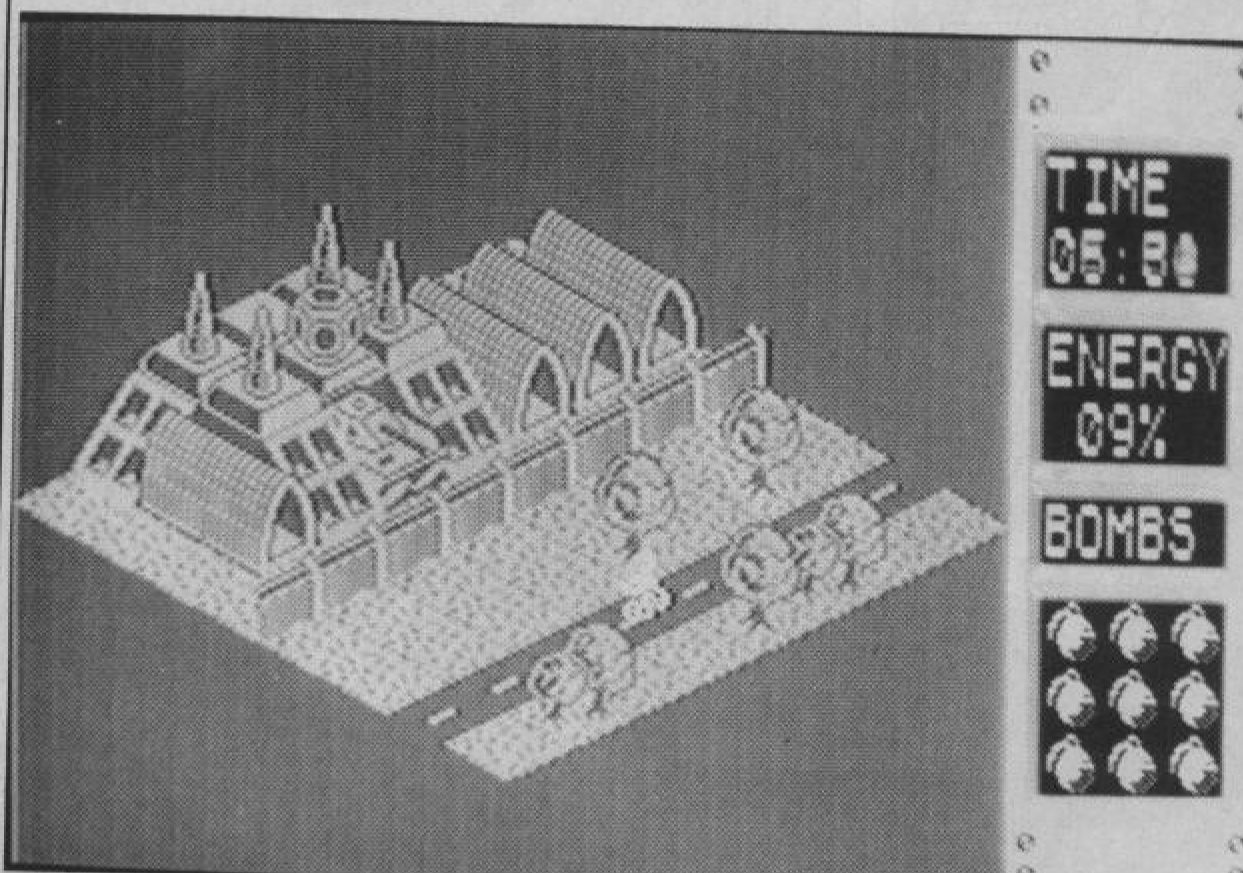
To destroy the complex, bombs have to be dropped on the domed reactor plants scattered around the island. Laser emplacements make life difficult, opening fire as soon as you get anywhere near them. A counter on the right of the screen indicates your energy status and each laser hit sends you spinning out of control for a few moments and reduces energy. Nine bombs are provided at the start of the game but further supplies can be gathered from dumps hidden on the island. Keep an eye out for them . . .

Once the complex has been thoroughly disabled the mission is complete and it's time to go home to enjoy the benefits of a peaceful retirement. A submarine is waiting out at sea, but can only hang around for thirty minutes . . . fail to find it and the glider eventually runs out of fuel, you crash into the sea and get eaten alive by sharks. What a way for a hero to end his days . . .





This game is initially compelling as there are quite a few locations to explore. But, after a couple of hours play, it becomes apparent that there isn't a great deal to see or do — simply bomb ten reactors and avoid umpteen laser emplacements. This may sound easy, but it's infuriatingly difficult and I soon found myself becoming thoroughly narked with the whole thing. The graphics are good and the soundtrack is superb — it's a shame there's not much of a game to gel everything together. Glider Rider **is fun for a while, but it didn't hold my interest long enough to convince me that it's worth buying.**





Glider Rider **sure is an unusual game, both to play and to solve. The tactics needed will take some time to learn and get to grips with — and the mission even longer to complete. There's lots to see, and lots to listen to, but unfortunately if you aren't willing to persevere with the game then you could well lose interest. However, with that said, I enjoyed it — but I can see it only appealing to a certain audience, so it's worth taking a look at it first.**



This type of 3D game is fairly common on most other computers, but very rare on the Commodore. When a game like this does appear it's usually pretty slow — this isn't though. The 3D works really well and you can zip about the place at a very high rate of knots. The game itself is difficult, but very enjoyable as you try to penetrate the rather well defended complex. The backing track is really brilliant with a extra nice piece when you go into glider mode. If you're after something a little different then go and have a look at this.

PRESENTATION 78%
Good on-screen presentation and humorous instructions.

GRAPHICS 81%
Although lacking in colour, the 3D is effective.

SOUND 96%
Two great Dave Whittaker tunes add atmosphere and excitement.

HOOKABILITY 84%
Instantly enjoyable, if a little tricky.

LASTABILITY 69%
Challenging but not compelling.

VALUE 70%
Worth it if you're willing to persevere.

OVERALL 71%
Good, but it would have been a lot better if there was more variety.

STREET SURFER

Entertainment USA, £2.99 cass, joystick only

Grab your skateboard and take to the streets! The city needs cleaning, and it needs cleaning NOW. The evil Phantom Empty Coke Bottle Lobber has been out and about and has spread empty Coke bottles all over the highway. Naturally, this sort of gratuitous pollution can't be tolerated, so you've been asked to whizz around after the litterbug on your motorised skateboard and clean up after him. You can never catch up with the evil do-badder and his trail of bottles always lies ahead of you. At least you can make some impact . . .

Street Surfer is a 3D race game where you must whizz down a never-ending road, running over as many Coke bottles as possible. The skate boarder can accelerate or decelerate and can turn left and right around corners — although the faster he goes the more difficult it is to steer him around a bend. If the skater whizzes around a bend too fast and runs off the road, he loses velocity, but doesn't take a tumble.

The road isn't empty — cars zoom along it — but it's a one way road, and vehicles only come from behind and try to overtake. If you get up enough speed you'll leave them behind and maybe even start overtaking them yourself.

Some of the cars are rather unfriendly and try to bump you off the road, others are more amicable and hold a full bottle of Coke out for you to grab, although care has to be taken, or you might crash into the side of the car. Collisions with cars result in a tumble that



This is one of the most boring games I've ever had the displeasure of meeting. The graphics are dull, so is the soundtrack, and collecting empty Coke bottles while avoiding Legoland cars and the occasional patch of oil proves monotonous after only a few games. There are plenty of cheaper, more exciting Mastertronic games available, so I suggest you do yourself a favour and give this one a miss.

reduces your health status as shown at the bottom of the screen on a bar that shrinks as you get squashed or crash into things. When the bar reaches zero your skater won't recover from the next tumble: the skateboard whizzes away into the sunset and the game ends. Running over an empty bottle or grabbing a full bottle of Coke from a passing motorist magically restores a bit of health, allowing you to continue further into the game.

Cars aren't the only thing on the road — dangerous oil slicks make the going tough by causing skids and tumbles. Chickens trudge across the road very now and again and must be avoided.



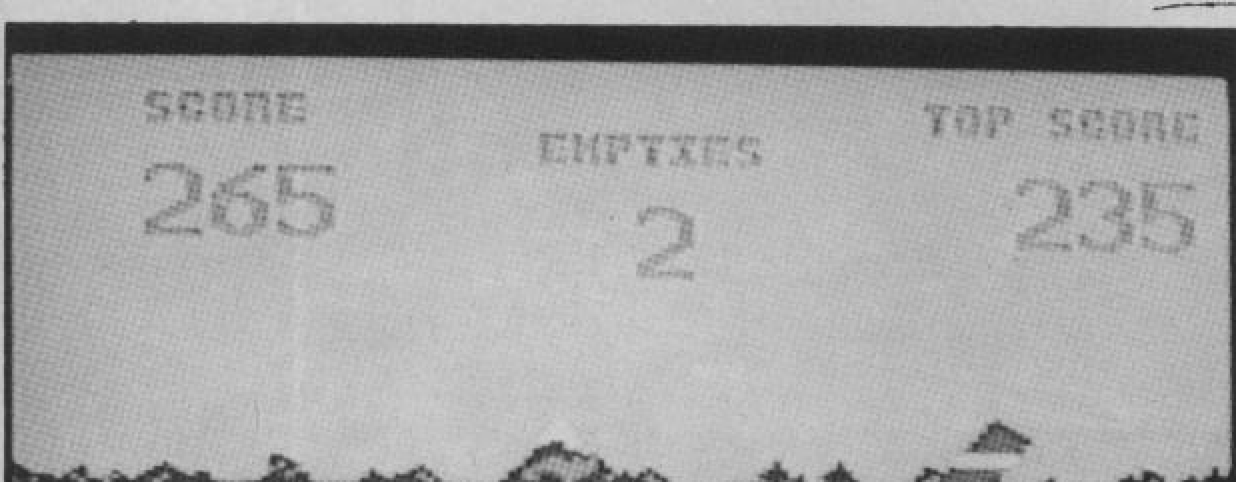
There are so many variations on the ancient Pole Position **format out on the market it seems hardly worthwhile producing another one. Still, Mastertronic have decided to pump out the nth one . . . and what a pointless exercise.** Street Surfer **is basically a load of rubbish which is unchallenging, unaddictive and totally boring to play. The graphics are pretty dull, but the gameplay is ten times worse — just whizz along the road collecting bottles. There isn't even a time limit to the game to add a little excitement. If you see** Street Surfer **coming along the road, take my advice and string a wire across it at head height.**

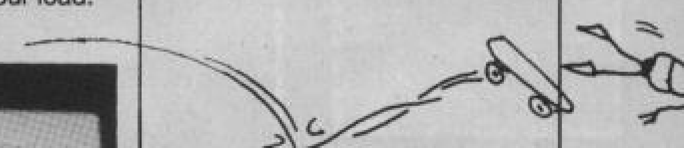
At regular intervals along the road there are neighbourhood bottle disposal dumps where your collection of empties can be offloaded. Bonus points are awarded for the bottles delivered. Once the drop's been made, your health is restored and you can start on your travels again. At the bottom of the screen there's a countdown to each bottle dump that reveals how far you have to go before you can dump your load.





I am not at all impressed with this offering from Mastertronic: it appears tacky in the extreme. The sprites are far too blocky to be representational of the character on the skateboard who seems to gather very little speed even though the speedometer registers a high amount. A very frustrating aspect is that cars come from behind, with little warning, and before you know it you're off skidding into the distance. Even at a measly three quid it isn't worth the asking price. No, I don't like it in the slightest.





PRESENTATION 56%
Dull title screen and no options.

GRAPHICS 34%
The sprites are chunky and poorly defined, and the road moves like there's an earthquake.

SOUND 65%
A short, bearable soundtrack speeds up and slows down as you do.

HOOKABILITY 40%
Some initial interest might be generated by the simplistic nature of the game.

LASTABILITY 25%
There's not much to come back to once you've played it a few times.

VALUE 34%
Low quality game for a low price.

OVERALL 29%
One of Mastertronic's weakest releases.

180

Mastertronic Added Dimension, £2.99 cass, joystick or keys

Mastertronic's latest release offers you the chance to play darts against one of eight computer opponents or a human player. Both games are played under professional rules — starting from 501, each player takes a turn at throwing three darts at the board in an attempt to be the first to reduce their score to zero.



I always thought a computer version of darts was a waste of time — after all, a board and a packet of cheapo darts hardly costs more than yer average computer game. Still, Mastertronic have decided to have a crack at the rather dubious darts market and have come up with a surprisingly good product. 180 is a real giggle of a game with very nice graphics and some really neat tunes. The game plays very well and although the hand wobbles about a fair bit, with practice you can move it to the right place and throw your darts on target . . . well, most of the time. My only gripe with this game is the computer players. On many occasions my opponent shot a nine dart 501 to wipe me out!!! Nevertheless, this is a very enjoyable program, especially when you consider the two player aspect of the game. 180 is a must for those who are too lazy to walk from the oche to the darts board to retrieve their arrows.



I hate darts — it's even more banal than football or snooker. However, much to my surprise, I found 180 great fun to play, especially with human opponent. It won't enthral for any great length of time and I wouldn't consider it to be an essential purchase, but for only three quid 180 is worth a second look.

When playing the game you are given control of a dart-wielding hand which wobbles around in front of the dart board. By moving the hand to the required position and pressing the fire button, the dart is thrown. The longer you keep your finger on the fire button, the harder the throw and the higher up the board the dart will land. All scoring is done automatically, but it's up to you to decide the best way to finish the game.

The single player game is played over three sets and each set is the best of three games. Once you have thrown, the screen changes to show your adversary taking his turn at throwing his darts. His score is then taken from his total and it's your turn again. If you manage to beat your opponent, you go on to the semi finals, played in similar fashion. Then, if you're really good, it's onto the finals and the nine dart finishes . . .



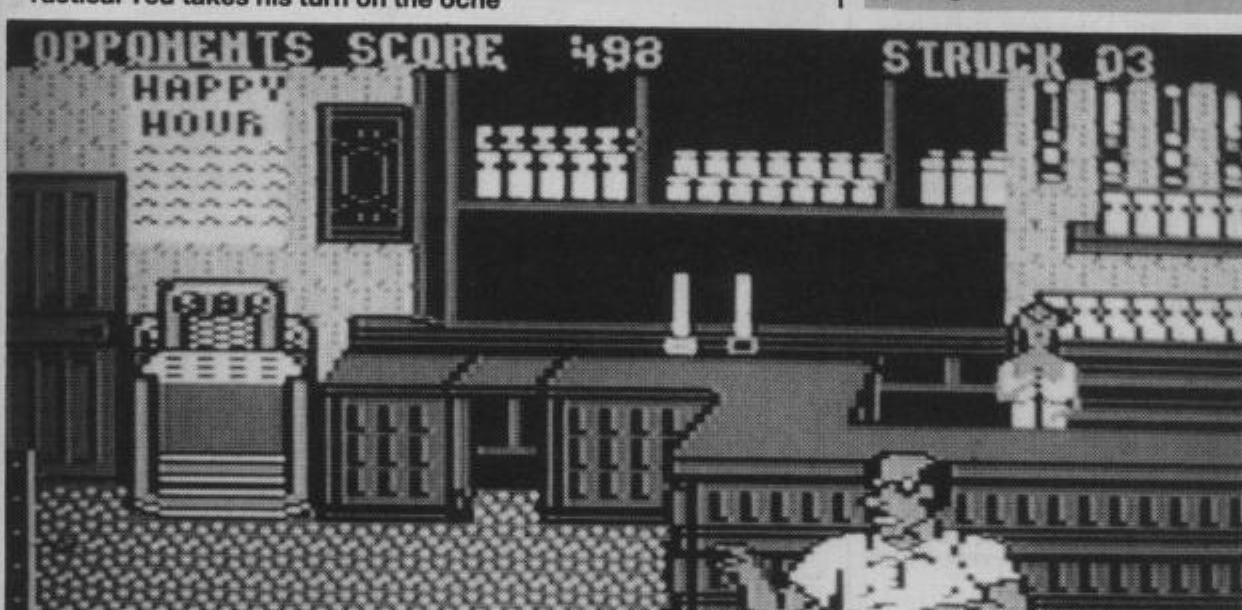


This is exactly what a darts game should be: great fun with a lot of excitement thrown in for good measure. The sound is good, especially the soft thud as a dart lands in the board. The digitised speech announcing 'one hundred and eighty' isn't too bad either. The choice of three variations on a game of darts is good, and the two player mode comes in handy for an alternative practice mode. I like 180 immensely and have no hesitation in recommending it to anyone who fancies a quick game of arrows.



Fortunately, the option to practice is available if the going proves too tough. There's no opponent to worry about in the practice game, only a time limit . . . you are given one minute to hit each number on the dart board in descending order, twenty through to one.

Tactical Ted takes his turn on the oche



PRESENTATION 75%
Sufficient instructions and a one or two player option.

GRAPHICS 64%
Well drawn dart board and hand, but the other graphics are a bit on the naff side.

SOUND 65%
A couple a Dave Whittaker tunes jolly along the proceedings.

HOOKABILITY 81%
Instantly playable.

LASTABILITY 62%
The computer players are tough, and the two player option provides some long term appeal.

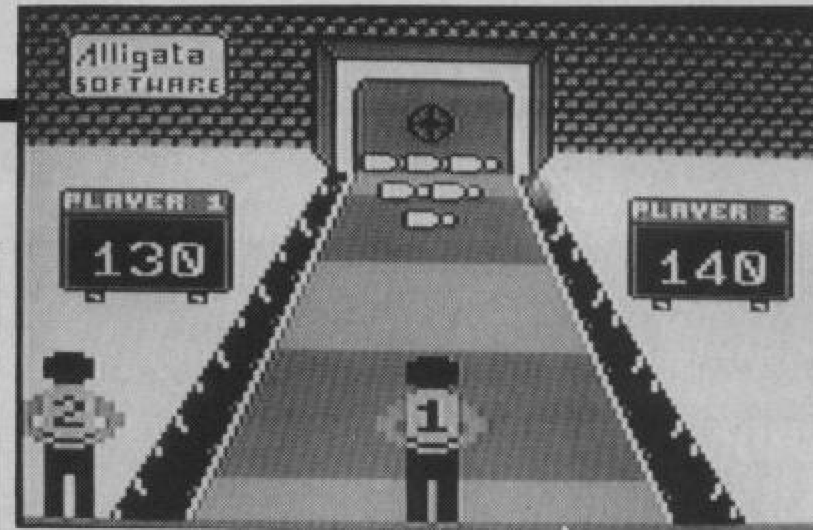
VALUE 76%
Plenty of cheap thrills to be had.

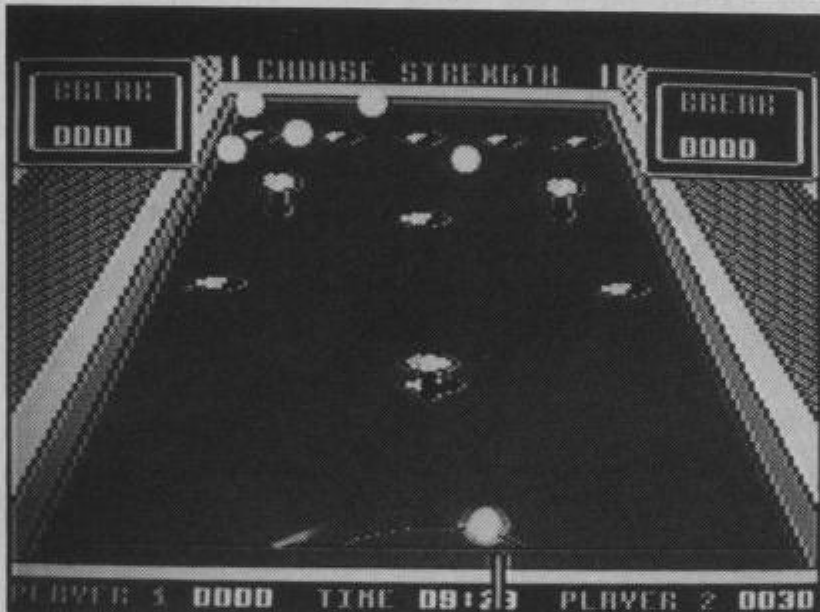
OVERALL 70%
Far from outstanding, but good fun.

ZZAP! TEST

PUB GAMES

Alligata, £9.95 cass, joystick only





Let's all go down the pub — 'ave a banana. Ow's the missus? Roll out the barrel ... 'ere we are guvnor, down at the old rub a dub dub, for a nice night out quaffing the Old Flatulence bitter while having a good round of arrows. Ow about a luvverly game of Bar Billiards? What d'ya fancy? Well, take yer pick — got the lot 'ere, all you could want for a free night out with the lads. Mag-nif-i-cent! Tell ya wot, let's start off with a baht of arrer chucking . . .

DARTS

Take to the Oche for a 501 or 301 round, selected by pressing the trusty **f1** key. The screen shows your view of the pub wall, ornately decorated with traditional wallpaper. Looks like you've been quaffing a mite too many . . . your view is a particularly wobbly one! As you try desperately to steady yourself, you must aim the disembodied hand at the board. When you are happy with the throwing position press fire to release the dart and watch it glide through the air and land, plunk, in the board. Darts fall to the ground if they hit the wire. Once you've completed the darts, have a quick slurp, and onto the . . .

BAR BILLIARDS

Played with eight balls, one of which is red and the rest white, the aim of the game is to sink balls into holes in the table. Each hole has a points value, ranging from ten to two hundred — the red ball score double. To make a shot you have to select the position from which the ball is to be hit, then the strength of the hit, and finally, the angle. Sit back and watch it wind its merry way up the table. Knocking down a white mushroom on the table ends a break and costs you the points collected, but felling the black mushroom removes you total score so far. After ten minutes, balls are not returned to play after they've been potted.

DOMINOES

There's money to be made in this game, yes a pound for the winner of each of the three rounds! Don't get too excited though, Alligata don't really cough up. Following league rules, the aim is to place all your dominoes on the table, taking it in turns to add dommies to the line building up. Pressing fire reveals the dominoes in your hand, so your opponent will have to turn away while you have a look. No cheating here folks. Once you have selected the domino you wish to play then you can manoeuvre it around the board, rotating it as you like. Best of three games decides the winner.



Alligata's latest release is really a collection of very mediocre programs. None of them stand out on their own at all, and on the whole they're all very boring and dull to play. The darts game is slow and cumbersome, so is the bar billiards and I thought the table football was really awful. Even the loading system is bad: I had great trouble in getting it to work and many times had to reload the game because it crashed. If pubs were really like this I'd never go.

TABLE FOOTBALL

This is played on a traditional table which is viewed from above. The objective is to score more goals than your opponent. Moving the joystick up or down moves the players nearest to the ball up or down. To kick the ball you simply move the joystick left or right. Nine footballs are provided per game and a pound goes to the winner of each game.

PONTOON

More money is involved, but from here on you're probably going to lose it. In pontoon the aim is to make up a hand of cards with a pip value of twenty one, or at least get closer to twenty one than anyone else playing. After your second card has been dealt you can stick, twist (get a card for free but everyone sees it) or buy (pay money to receive a card face down). Wimping out isn't allowed — you can't stick below sixteen. Each player plays ten consecutive hands and can bet between one pound and a fiver.

POKER

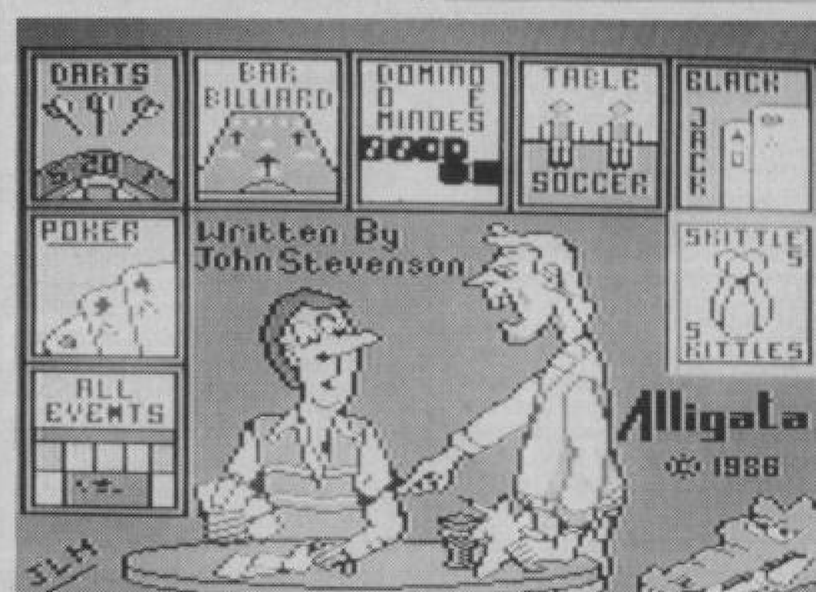
Yep, another money down the drain game. Playing a five card game you get one chance to change up to five cards and then the betting begins. Usual poker rules apply, with full houses, flushes and runs all appearing . . .

SKITTLES

Nice destructive game, skittles — after losing your loot at cards you get the chance to work out some physical aggression by knocking over everything in view. With ball in hand, try to align it with the skittles, then roll it down the alley and kerrrack, knock em all over — or maybe not. Never mind it's still ten points for every skittle that's sent down the hole and best of five games decides who wins the pound prize.



I am really in two minds about this. On the one hand the games are quite fun and well thought out, but then again there doesn't really seem all that much to them. Darts began as quite fun, but it wasn't long before it became too long and drawn out seeming to go on for ever. Surprisingly, I think I enjoyed the dominoes games best of all. Dunno why, just appealed to me. But I wouldn't pay ten quid for it.





This was fun for a short while but I found all seven 'events' lacked that certain something to keep me coming back for more. There are some uncomfortable delays throughout, mainly when scores are announced, and some of the games prove quite tedious to play, especially the darts which I found to be the most frustrating game of the lot ('hitting the wire' was a common occurence when going for doubles or trebles, resulting in one very irate Penn). Pub Games is basically a collection of barely average budget games, so for ten quid it represents reasonable value for money.

PRESENTATION 83%
Adequate in-game presentation — although there are often some annoying delays — and a neat loading system (when it works).

GRAPHICS 53%
On the whole, lacklustre.

SOUND 58%
A couple of simple but suitable jingles.

HOOKABILITY 60%
Some initial urge to do well at all events.

LASTABILITY 52%
One or two events might prove compelling — but not much.

VALUE 60%
Seven reasonable games for a tenner.

OVERALL 59%
An unusual approach to the sports simulation theme which doesn't quite work.



Ⓐ Spectrum 48K Ⓔ Atari
Ⓑ CBM 64/128 Ⓕ BBC
Ⓒ Amstrad Ⓖ Electron
Ⓓ C16 plus 4 Ⓗ MSX

Master Games

Unbelievable Ultimate

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Atic Atac / Sabre Wolf / Underwurlde / Alien 8 Ⓐ

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Sabre Wulf / Alien 8 / Nightshades Ⓒ £7.99

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Big names Bonanza

Fight Night / Stellar 7 / Forbidden Fores / Talladega Ⓑ

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All cassettes £9.99 (Except Unbelievable Ultimate Amstrad £7.99)

CAPTAIN KELLY

Quicksilva, £7.95 cass, joystick only

The job advertised in the Galactic Times seemed ideal: 'See the universe and make mega credits.' 'Qualified pilots only need apply,' it said. That's you isn't it? Captain Kelly, ex-space corps and qualified to fly any type of ship. With those qualifications you couldn't fail to get the job . . .

The only problem is that the job is incredibly boring — all you have to do is pick up ships from their parked orbit above Earth, check out their main instrumentation and deliver them safely to their owners. You certainly need to be a qualified pilot though — some of the ships look as if they would never make the planetfall trip to the space port! Oh well, at least taking the job was better than being unemployed. Just. So you get into the routine and day after day pick up and deliver craft . . . a 'safe' job with no action. Well, until today.

You've been ordered to pick up a craft called the Obsidian II, a new breed of robot-protected class XIV mining vessel. A nice and easy job you thought to yourself as you inserted your security pass into the lock to disable the robot guards.



Captain Kelly **is basically a poor man's** Paradroid **and I'm not impressed with it in the slightest. It's slow and monotonous to play, the graphics are simple and ineffective, and the tune played throughout the game is aurally offensive.** Captain Kelly **is an incredibly B-A-D piece of software which should be left alone to die and rot in peace.**



This is a blatant Paradroid **rip-off, and a really bad one at that. The Kelly sprite trudges around the place at a really slow speed and killing off the robots is a dull and pointlessly long task. The graphics consist of very poor bas-relief and the sprites are dull and badly animated. There are very few original features in the game and there's nothing on offer to keep you coming back to it. If you like the sound of this sort of scenario then look at** Paradroid **first, it's several classes above this.**

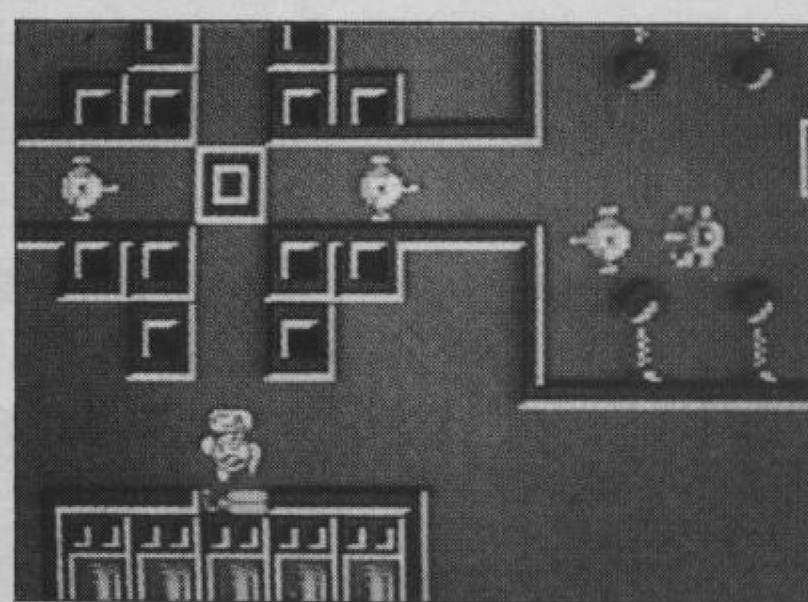
Your pass is rejected so you try again, but again the pass is rejected. Perhaps there's a malfunction? Still, there's no problem — you can enter the ship through the main door.

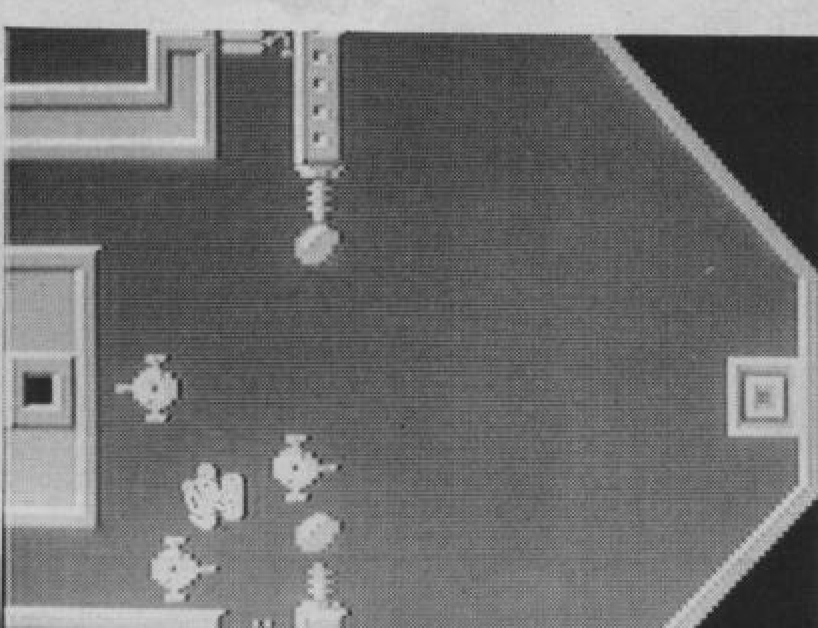
The doors clang shut behind you, breaking your train of thought and you suddenly remembered the claim of the company which built the ship: 'the security system which lets intruders in but not out'. Oops. Well, here's the action that you were hankering after . . . You've just entered a seven level ship and each level is crawling with vicious anti-personnel droids with one thing on their binary minds: your destruction.

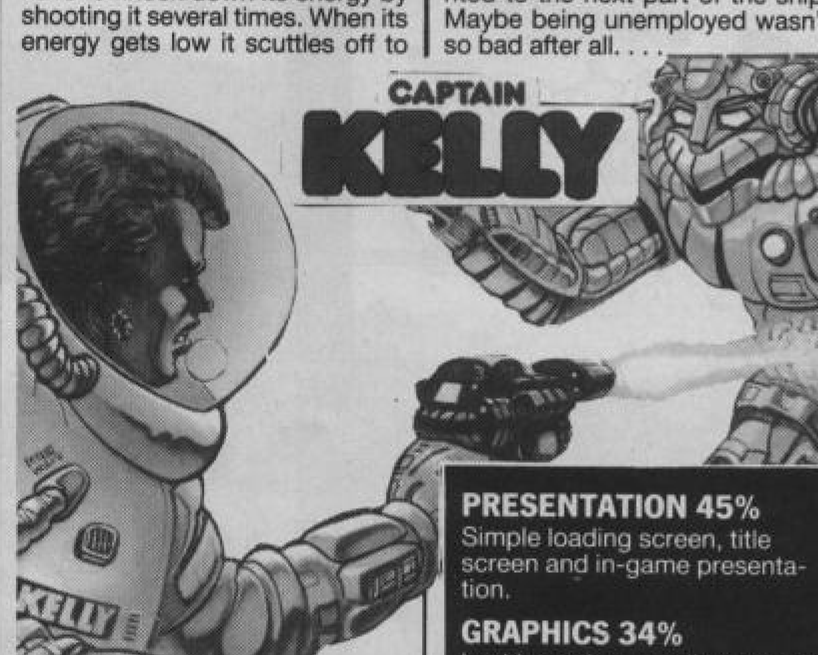
The action takes place in a scrolling window, and is viewed from above. To take control of the ship you must destroy all the robots on each of the seven levels and then make your way to the main control room to power up the two gauges found there. To make matters more complicated you also have to keep your eye on your vital supplies — oxygen, energy and ammunition. Run out of oxygen or energy and Kelly dies, ending the game. Without bullets, your gun doesn't work and robots can't be killed. Supply centres on each deck of the ship can be used to replenish stocks, but you're only allowed to visit each supply centre a set number of times. Strolling into a computer terminal allows Kelly to check his status.

To dispose of a robot guard you have to knock down its energy by shooting it several times. When its energy gets low it scuttles off to look for a robot repair room where it can recharge. If you allow it to reach the repair room it will emerge refreshed and twice as keen to kill you as it was before, so make sure you finish it off before it gets there!

When all the robots on a level have been eliminated the level shuts down and is unguarded — no more robots will appear there. Then it's time to move on to the next level using the on-board transporter system — just walk into a transporter and you are spirited to the next part of the ship. Maybe being unemployed wasn't so bad after all. . . .









Captain Kelly, **eh? Not a name that makes you want to grab the game and play it with enthusiasm. It sounds hopelessly dated and believe me, it sure is. The graphics are weak and unimaginative and rarely vary through the different levels making it all extremely tedious. After seeing this game I didn't want to play it. When I eventually did play it, I quickly became bored, and I don't want to play it again.**

PRESENTATION 45%
Simple loading screen, title screen and in-game presentation.

GRAPHICS 34%
Lacking colour, quality and variety.

SOUND 19%
Abysmal tune played throughout the game.

HOOKABILITY 39%
Tedious from the outset.

LASTABILITY 28%
Not much to do or enthral.

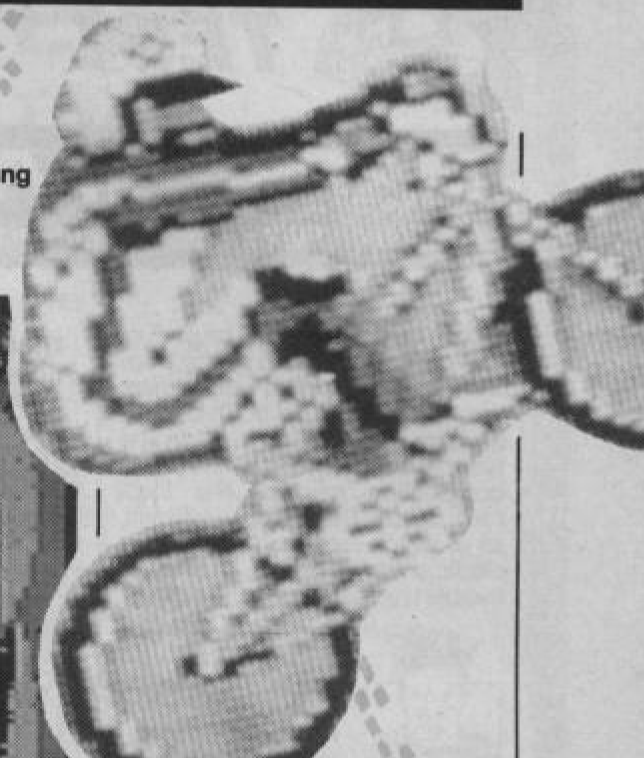
VALUE 29%
A vastly inferior version of **Paradroid** for the same price.

OVERALL 30%
Quite simply, a very dull shoot em up.

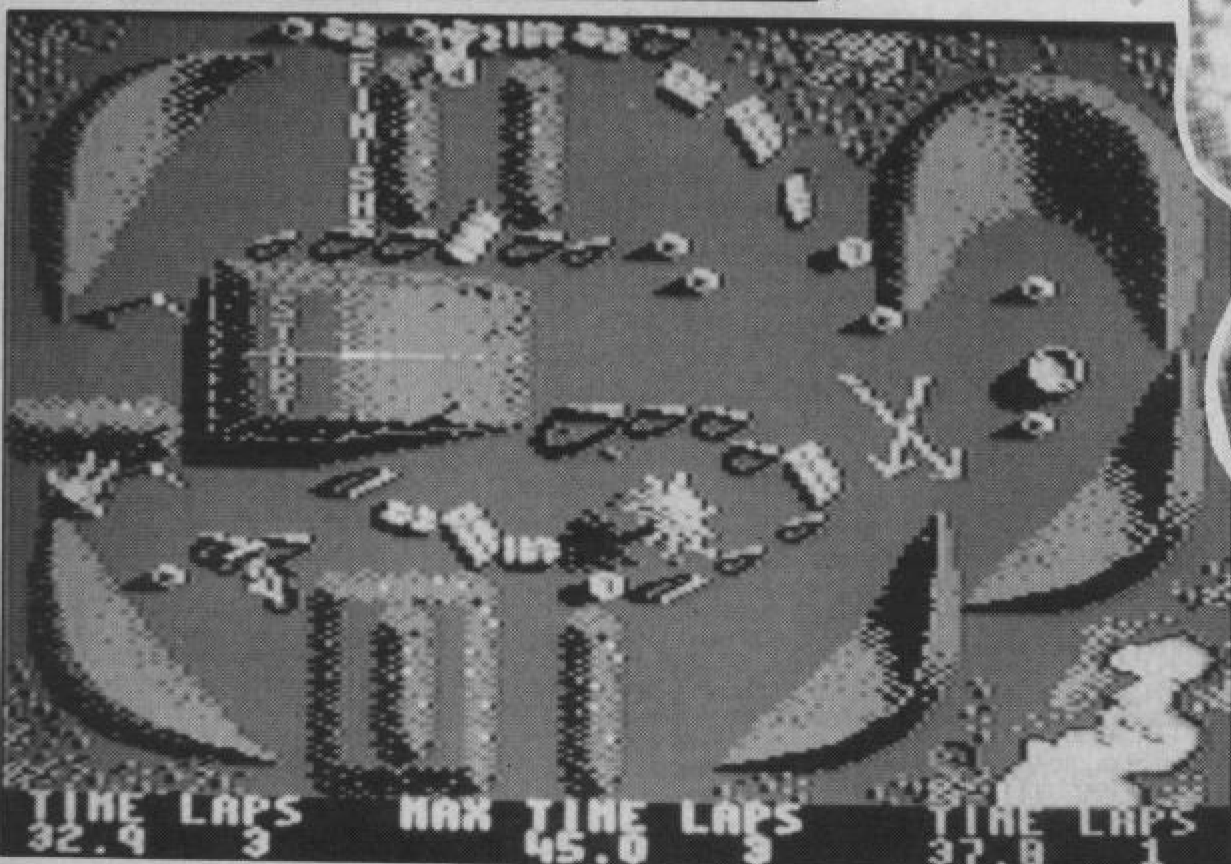


BMX SIMULATOR

Code Masters, £1.99 cass, joystick or keys



Both players experiencing problems with the third course



BMX riding is one of the biggest crazes to appear in recent years. There have been BMX songs, films, books, comics, clothes . . . you name it, someone has BMXed it. Now, Code Masters have produced a computer simulation of BMX riding: **BMX Simulator**, featuring seven increasingly difficult courses and a two player option.

Each track is shown from above and features ramps, burms, bumps and an assortment of other obstacles. Two cyclists appear on the starting ramp and a countdown announces the start of the race. Holding down the fire button turns the pedals; to brake you simply release the fire button. Moving the joystick left or right rotates the bike, effectively steering it.

To finish a race you must complete three laps within an allotted time limit. If you manage to complete a course, you are given a score (the faster you go, the bigger your score) and automatically placed on the starting grid of the next course. Failure to complete a course means disqualification, so you can't progress to the next track.

An 'action replay' feature is thoughtfully provided, so once you have completed a course you can relive any particularly hairy moments all over again.



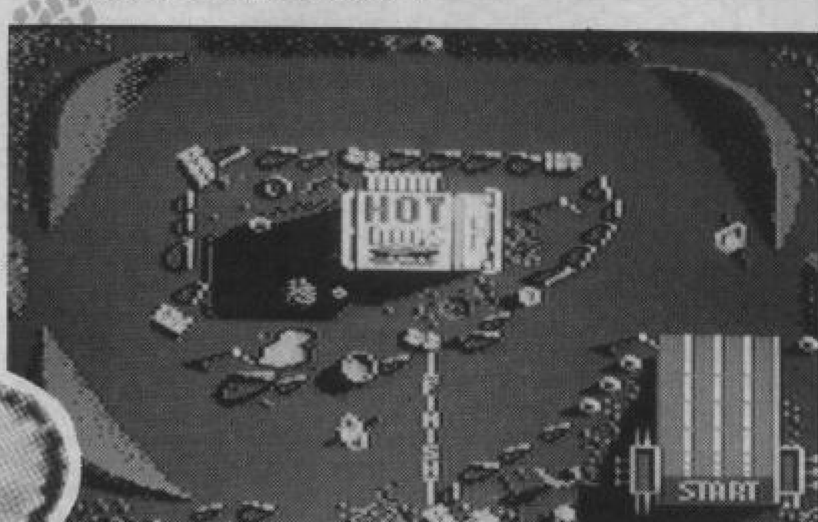
BMX Simulator **is fun and surprisingly compelling. It's one of those games that originally strikes you as being ineffective, but on further investigation it grows on you. I'm quite happy with the graphics and the superb sound really takes the biscuit. For only two quid,** BMX Simulator **is well worth having a look at.**



This is a very simple race game with little variety but plenty of playability. It's well presented (lots of useful options), graphically competent (the backdrops are pretty, but the sprites are a bit iffy) and features decent music and adequate spot FX. As budget titles go, this is one of the best I've seen and played. BMX Simulator **is two quid well spent.**



This is a bit like a scaled down version of the arcade game Super Sprint III. **Though limited in scope, it's still pretty good fun — especially with two players battling it out against each other. The graphics are really great with colour effectively used to display the aerial view of the track. The sound is another good feature with a thumping good David Whittaker tune on the title screen — it's a shame it gets cut short by the demo mode. There are plenty of options, and overall the game is slick and well polished. If you've got a couple of quid burning a hole in your pocket, there are many worse things to spend it on.**





PRESENTATION 83%
One or two player options, action replay and even slow motion!

GRAPHICS 84%
Effective bas-relief backdrops and dull sprites.

SOUND 91%
Great Whittaker soundtrack and ditties.

HOOKABILITY 84%
As easy to get into as falling off a bike.

LASTABILITY 81%
The computer opponent is tough, and the two player options maintains the initial interest.

VALUE 90%
A mere two quid for a great little racing game.

OVERALL 83%
A must for BMX fans and worthy of a look if your too old for the real thing.

ZZAP! TEST

MARBLE MADNESS

Ariolasoft, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick only

Being a marble isn't much fun, especially when you're trapped in a surreal world where the laws of physics don't behave as they should. So, to pass the time, you decide to enter the yearly competition held at the local racecourse. There are six courses, all of which are raced against the clock, either alone or with another marble if you so desire. The aim of the race is simple: get from the start to the finishing post before the time limit expires.

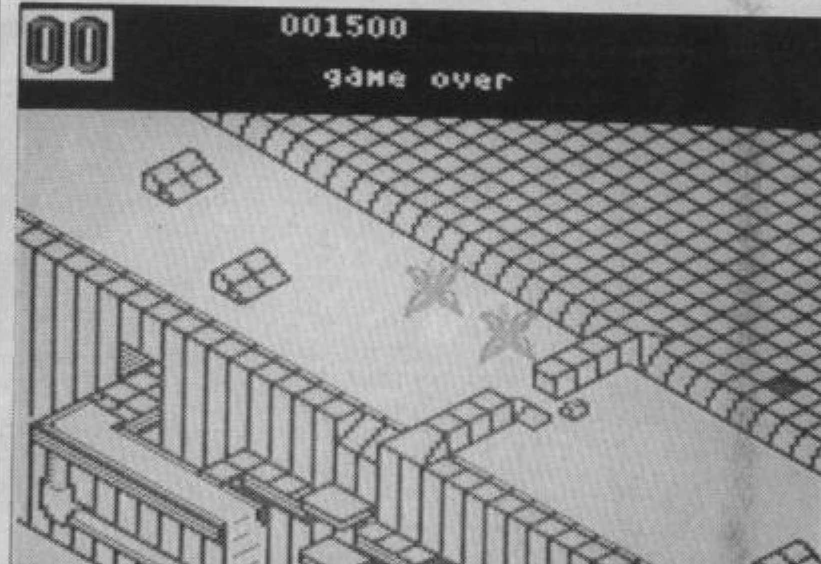
Each course is suspended in space and comprises of small plateaus and areas of land connected by twisting narrow ramps and bridges. Racing over the land is straightforward enough, but the narrow ramps and bridges can prove hazardous — one false move and you will fall over the edge into the void. If this happens your marble is placed back onto the land and time is lost.

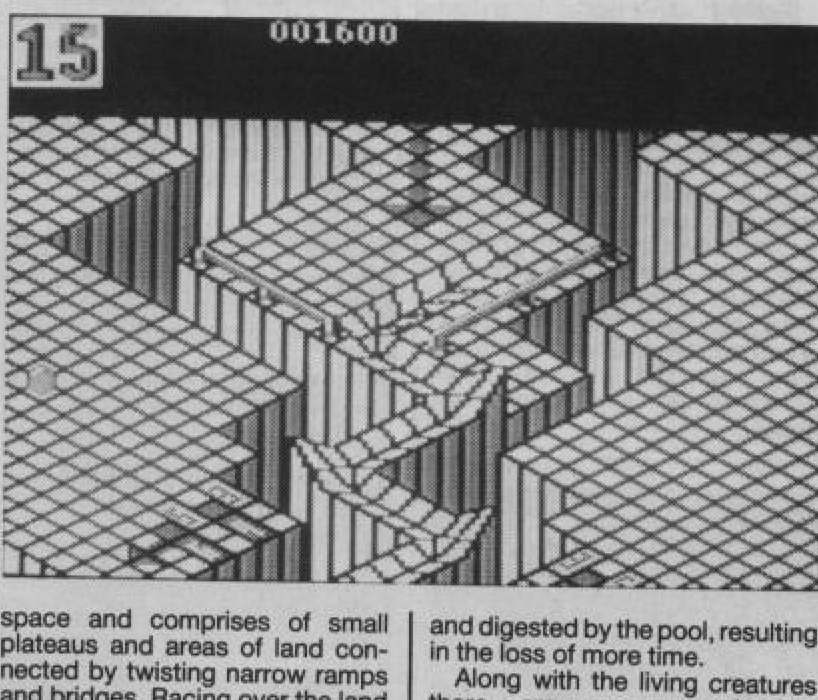
Three breeds of creature live on the racecourses and all have an intense disliking for the intrepid marble racers. Black marbles are twisted and evil outcasts of the marble society who just love to bump racers into the void. Marble Munchers leap onto and devour any marble stupid enough to stray near, resulting in a loss of time. Acid pools lack any senses and drift over the landscape in the hope that a marble will be careless enough to drift into it. Should this happen, the marble is dissolved and digested by the pool, resulting in the loss of more time.

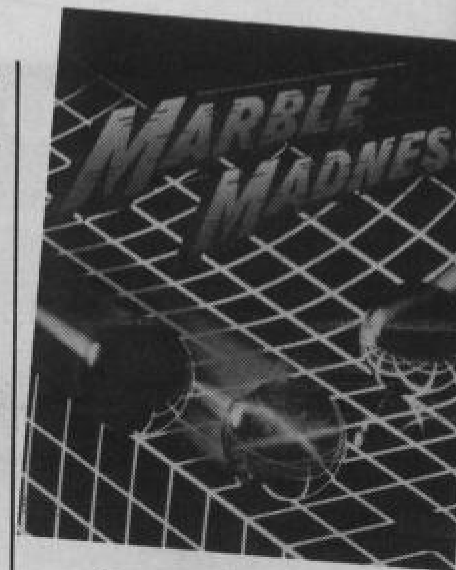
Along with the living creatures there are many mechanical hazards which must be negotiated. The first contraption you encounter is the mechanical wave machine. This pumps out wave after wave of metallic sludge upon which you must surf if you are to reach the finishing line. Giant hoovers are another big problem, rising up from underneath a particularly thin section of the track in an attempt to suck you off. A catapult has to be used to negotiate a huge chasm, and on later levels mechanical bridges make the going very hazardous.

Each racecourse features a different characteristic. Level four requires some rather hefty jumps, and level five has reverse gravity. If you manage to reach the finishing post within the allotted time, then the remaining seconds are converted to bonus points and you progress onto the next level. At the beginning of the next race, extra seconds are added to your total and you start all over again.

The Secret Water Level. How do you get here? All is revealed in the Tips section . . .









In the continuing saga of poorly executed conversions comes this heap of something nasty and smelly. This really is a poor product which fails to impress or excite me in the slightest. The programmers have tried very hard to get everything into this conversion, but it is lacking the consistency of the arcade version. If you liked the arcade version then avoid this at all costs, it'll give you nightmares.



What a massive disappointment! Perhaps I was expecting too much, but what we have here is a second-rate conversion which lacks the playability of its arcade parent. The graphics and layout of the screens are very faithful to the original, but that's about it. Playability wise it's lacking on many counts. For a start, the scrolling has problems in keeping up with the marble, and on level four the ball constantly rolls off the bottom of the screen. While the scrolling tries to catch up, you hear your marble dropping off the landscape! Frustrating, to say the least. Another big niggle is that the marble sometimes drops off the road when it's nowhere near the edge, resulting in more frustration. Even more frustration is encountered when you have to wait for each level to load — it takes ages! As a game on its own, Marble Madness is not much fun. It only has six levels and we very nearly completed them after about half an hour's play! The music ranges from passable to downright abysmal, the tunes on levels three and four being the worst. The only good thing going for this game is the two player option, and even that slows the game down horrendously at times! If you really like the arcade game and are interested in this conversion, I suggest you look at it before buying. I wouldn't recommend it.



Electronic Arts have managed to cram in nearly all the features of the original arcade game ... but they haven't been executed very well. The backdrops are good and the sprites bear a passing resemblance to those seen on the arcade game. However, the scrolling is s-l-o-w and most of the time the screen has severe problems in keeping up with the marble. Fun, fun, fun — and very frustrating. All the tunes are there too, it's just that the notes aren't quite sure when they should play. The result is abysmal. Gyroscope wasn't any better, but at least it was one load. Maybe a decent conversion of Marble Madness isn't possible within the limitations of the 64 — if this is the case then Electronic Arts shouldn't have bothered.

PRESENTATION 39%
Cute cheat mode, but otherwise the program is lacking gloss. Abysmal loading system — more time is spent loading than playing.

GRAPHICS 70%
Decent backdrops, reasonable scrolling, mediocre sprites.

SOUND 39%
Awful tunes and few spot FX.

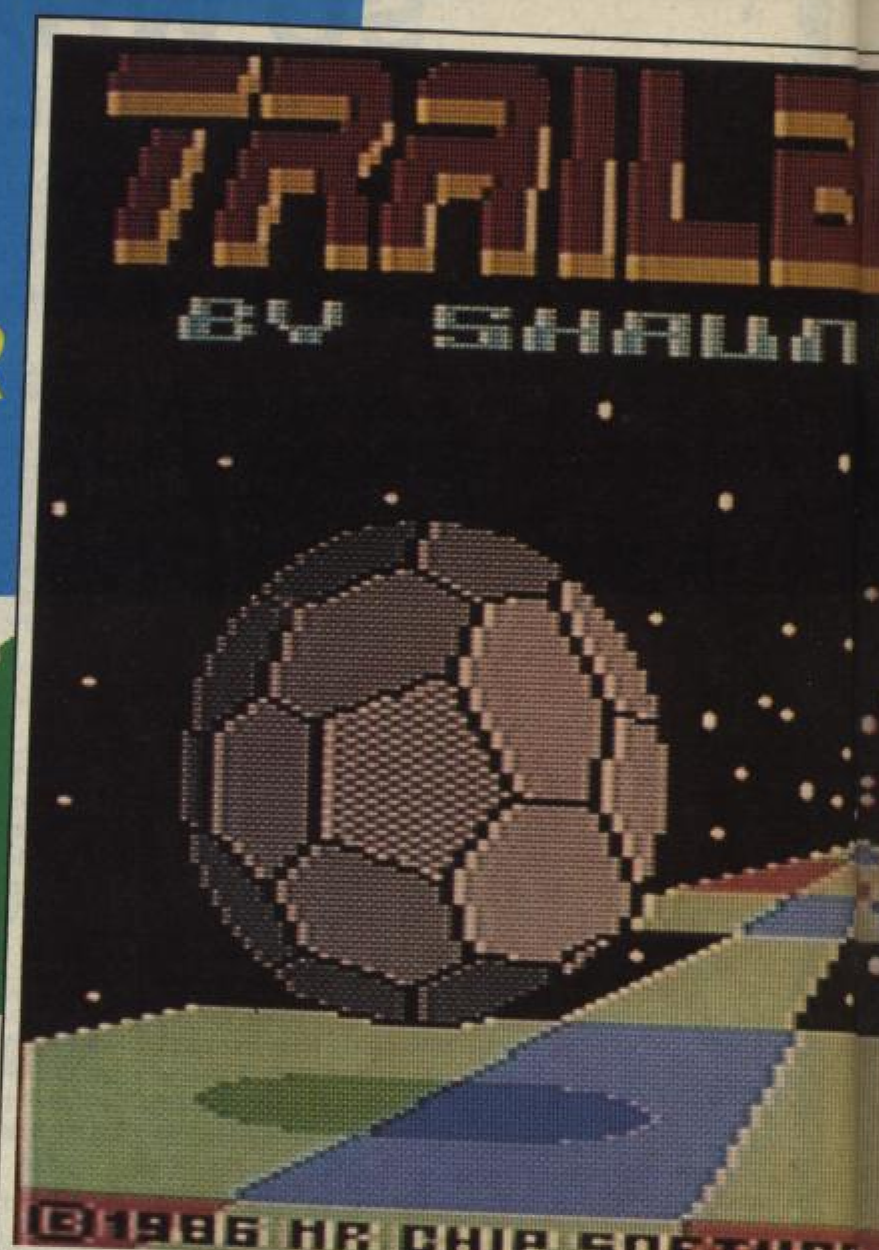
HOOKABILITY 76%
Easy enough to play, and initially quite fun.

LASTABILITY 38%
Six tedious levels to complete — seven if you include the water level.

VALUE 33%
Overpriced for what it offers.

OVERALL 40%
A very disappointing, second rate conversion.

TEST



TRAILBLAZER

Gremlin Graphics, £9.95 cass, joystick or keys

- **Wierd but wonderful split screen racing game**
- **21 tortuous tracks, one or two player option**

Ever fancied racing across the mystic pathways of space through unknown galaxies, boldly blazing a trail where no other trail has been blazed before? Well now's your chance . . .

Trailblazer is a three dimensional, one or two player, split screen race game in which you must travel as far as you can along a straight spacial pathway. The pathway is split into twenty one different sections, each must be completed within a given time limit. If the clock runs down before you get to the finishing post, the game terminates. However, if you manage to pass the post in time, extra time is added to your total allowing you to tackle the next section of the track. There are no other objects on the course to worry about (only the other racer if two players are playing), it's just you versus the clock.

The racing tracks are made up of many metal slabs, although not all the slabs are of the same metallic composition. Each metal is a different colour and has a different effect on the racing craft (see panel for details).

The Trailblazer race craft have been specially designed for space path racing and look rather like footballs. They stick to the surface of the path as they zoom down it, but can move left or right with a push of the joystick. Pushing forward or pulling back on the joystick makes the craft accelerate or decelerate, and pressing the fire button makes it jump a short distance.

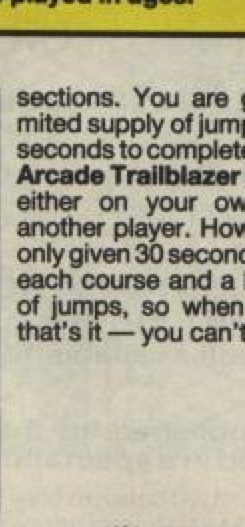
There are two main racing options presented on the title screen: **Course Practice** gives one or two players the chance to race over any three of the path sections. You are given an unlimited supply of jumps and with 99 seconds to complete each course. **Arcade Trailblazer** can be played either on your own or against another player. However, you are only given 30 seconds to complete each course and a limited supply of jumps, so when you run out, that's it — you can't jump!



Gremlin really have proved themselves over the past year and Trailblazer won't tarnish their reputation in the slightest. This version is the best of the lot, with the two player option making the races very exciting and exhilarating. I must admit, I tend to play the practice mode more than the arcade mode as it's a great opportunity to see the various levels, some of which are very devious. Overall, this one of the most addictive and challenging games I've played in ages.







Two player race games are always great fun to play, especially when they are as good as this. Trailblazer **is a simple game with little variety, but it's very playable. Some of the courses are too frustrating and I found the one player mode monotonous at times, but on the whole** Trailblazer **is a competent release which should appeal to anyone who would love the opportunity to thrash the pants off a friend in a two player game.**



BROWN slabs make up the bulk of the track. Going over them has no effect on your craft.
BLUE slabs make the craft bounce.
GREEN slabs instantly increase your craft to maximum velocity.
WHITE slabs increases your velocity to 'warp' speed, although the action is cancelled if you touch a black, purple or red square.
CYAN slabs reverse your controls and consequently cause a lot of hassle.
BLACK slabs are really holes in the road which must be avoided at all costs. If you fall into one, time is lost before your ball is thrown back onto the course.
PURPLE slabs stop the ball in its tracks.
RED slabs slow you down to minimum speed.
GREY slabs announce the beginning or end of a race track.

Trailblazer is loose cross between Pitstop II **and** Bounder, **and has taken the addictive qualities of both. The object of the game is really simple, but actually getting to the end of each course within the allotted time limit takes a lot of skill and practice. The graphics are really effective and colourful, and the whole thing plays superbly, especially in two player mode. If you're after an unusual and immensely addictive race game, then look no further than this, it's great.**





PRESENTATION 96%
Suitable title screen and several functional options.

GRAPHICS 89%
Simple, but very effective.

SOUND 80%
Jolly title screen tune and a few spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 96%
Highly unusual and compelling.

LASTABILITY 92%
Lacks variety, but the two player game holds long term interest.

VALUE 89%
Pricey but worth it.

OVERALL 93%
An excellent variation on the race game theme.


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ZZAP! TEST



BOULDERDASH
CONSTRUCTION KIT

Databyte/First Star, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick with keys

- Comprehensive construction kit plus Boulderdash IV
- Design your own caves and intermission screens with ease



It's been over a year since First Star released the last official Boulderdash game — Rockford's Riot — **and ever since then I've been yearning for some form of construction kit. Now it's arrived — and I reckon it's been worth the wait. Designing caves and intermission screens is simplicity in itself (using the random function it's iamond falls through and activates it for a predetermined time possible to create a playable cave in seconds!) and unlike the original game, nearly everything can appear in a cave — fireflies, butterflies, magic wall, slime, expanding wall . . . the** Boulderdash Construction Kit **is quite simply brilliant. It's got immense potential and shouldn't be overlooked by any self-respecting fan of the original game.**



Boulderdash was first conceived in 1981 by a thirteen year old Chris Gray (who went on to design and program **Whirlynurds** and **Infiltrator**). Within two years **Boulderdash** was programmed on an Atari, and then converted to the Commodore. In December 1984 the game was released in Britain where it quickly established a strong cult following. Then, during the summer of 1985, came a follow-up called **Rockford's Riot** and a year later, **Boulderdash III** was released.

Now, First Star are set to release the long awaited **Boulderdash Construction Kit**, a utility which allows you to design and play your very own **Boulderdash** games, complete with caves and intermissions.

For the uninitiated (where have you been?), **Boulderdash** puts you in control of a small insect-like creature called Rockford. This strange fellow spends his whole life roaming caves, avoiding nasty creatures and collecting precious diamonds.

In a standard game there are sixteen caves and four bonus screens. The caves are roughly four screens in size and contain four basic elements: diamonds, boulders, dirt and spaces. Rockford can tunnel through dirt, run through diamonds (thus collecting them) and push boulders horizontally (as long as there isn't any dirt or immovable object in the way). The screen scrolls with him as he moves.

The object of the game is to collect a certain amount of diamonds from each cave — within a given time limit (which varies from cave to cave). If the quota of diamonds flies, butterflies, amoeba, and slime. Each has its own characteristic which can, and occasion-



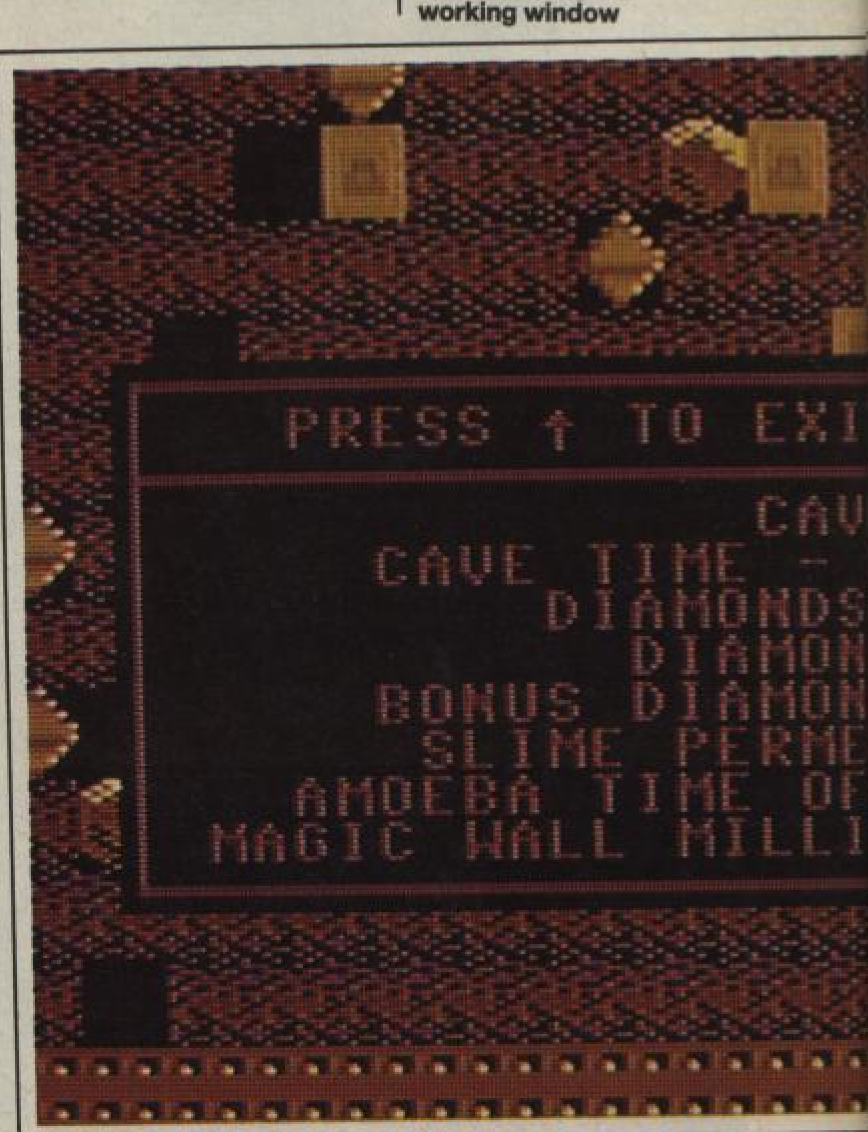
This is a Boulderdash **player's dream come true — an easy to use construction kit which allows you to design the screens you've always wanted to play. The designer is extremely well thought out and it takes no time at all to work out how to use it. As for designing screens . . . it couldn't be any simpler — just put everything where you want it and you've got your cave. The designer also comes complete with** Boulderdash IV **(which is a neat game in itself) so you can play that and get some inspiration — some of the screens are nicely implemented! If there's one game worth buying this month, it's this.**



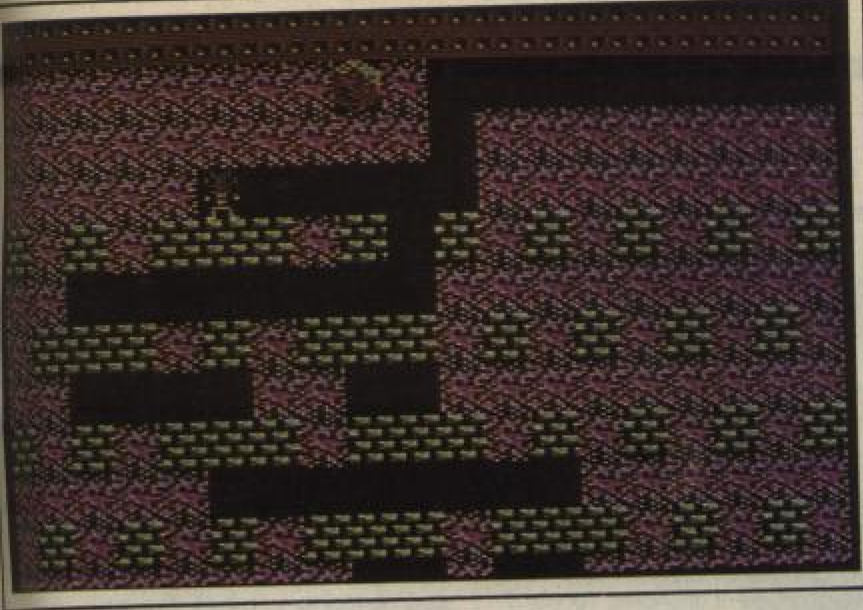
One of the sixteen caves in Boulderda **IV. After successfully digging his way through many levels of expanding wal Rocky must push the boulder from he**

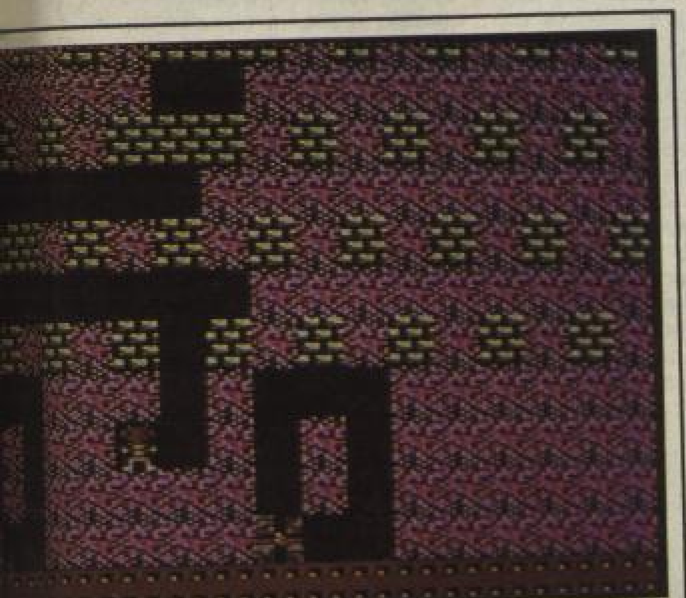


. . . to here, then drop it on one of the butterflies to get the diamonds he needs. But which butterfly?



Repositioning the working window









Constructionsets are always great fun, but a Boulderdash **one? Honestly, I flipped over this. It's brilliant. There's no end to the amount of weird and wonderful designs you can come up with. It's the sheer flexibility of the program that impresses me — it's really simple to use and no hassle when it comes to trying out your designed screen. When you're bored of** Boulderdash Construction Kit, **you're bored of yourself because it all relies on your imagination.**



is collected before the time limit reaches zero, then an exit is activated allowing Rocky to escape to the next cave.

Some caves are also inhabited by weird creatures, such as fireally must be put to good use.

The **Boulderdash Construction Kit** comes in two parts, a screen designer and a main **Boulderdash** program, into which a maximum of 64 previously defined caves can be loaded. Ten caves and five intermission screens are provided, so you effectively have **Boulderdash IV** to play with.

Any possible sequels are in your hands . . .

The construction kit is icon driven. Options are executed by moving a joystick controlled cursor over the relevant icon, then pressing the fire button. A complete list of icons is displayed down the far right hand side of the screen, alongside a 'working area' which consists of a quarter of the whole cave structure, ie: one screen. This working area can be changed by firstly calling up a complete miniature 'map' of the cave, then moving a window to the required position.

Caves or intermission screens can be play-tested at any time (as long as there is an entrance and an exit present) or saved out to disk (or tape) for future use.

1 BOULDER
Very common, can be used to create big problems for Rocky.

2 DIAMOND
The most important object in the game. No need to use these in abundance to make a cave difficult to complete.

3 ENCHANTED WALL
Looks like a normal piece of wall . . . until a boulder or diamond falls through and activates it for a predetermined time limit. During this time the wall sparkles and changes any rocks that fall through it into diamonds, and vice versa.

4 WALL
Impassable, unless a hole is made in it.

5 TITANIUM WALL
Completely inpenetrable, used around the edge of each cave.

6 EXPANDING WALL
Looks like a normal piece of wall, but expands in a horizontal direction if there is space either side of it.

7 EXTRA ROCKFORD
One or more of these can be placed anywhere on screen. They play a passive part in the game, but if a firefly or butterfly comes into contact with one, it explodes . . . and so do you!

8 DIRT
A common substance through which Rocky can tunnel.

9 FIREFLY
Flitters about until it comes into contact with an amoeba, a falling rock or Rockford, whereupon it explodes destroying everything within a one square radius.

10 BUTTERFLY
Similar to the firefly, but nine diamonds are created when it explodes.

11 AMOEBA
Multiplies through dirt and spaces until it reaches 200 squares, whereupon it turns into boulders. If trapped and unable to expand before it reaches 200 squares, amoeba turns into diamonds. Destroys fireflies and butterflies, too!

12 SLIME
Looks like amoeba but doesn't expand.

13 HIDDEN DOOR
Doesn't flash when a sufficient number of diamonds have been collected.

14 REGULAR EXIT DOOR
Flashes when a sufficient number of diamonds have been collected.

15 ENTRY DOOR
The entrance to each cave.

16 LINE MODE
Used to draw lines of most objects.

17 RANDOM
Selecting an icon followed by this function, randomly places five units of the selected object on the screen.

18 ERASER
Can be used to create spaces or remove unwanted objects.

19 CHANGE COLOURS
Use this to change the colour scheme.

20 TEST (SCREEN)
Allows you to play the cave or intermission created — provided it features an entrance and exit.

21 MAIN MENU
Allows you LOAD or SAVE games. The disk version also features standard disk commands, such as directory, delete, copy, rename, and format.

22 NEW SCREEN
Erases the screen, allowing you to create a new one.

23 PALETTE
Removes the icons and functions from the right hand screen so objects can be placed on the far right of the screen.

24 TIMERS AND COUNTERS
Allows the parameters of the screen to be changed, ie: number of diamonds needed to be collected before the exit opens, time limit, value of diamonds, speed of the game, time for enchanted walls and amoebae, and so on.

FULL SCREEN
This option is only accessible from the keyboard. A full screen miniature map of the cave being edited is displayed, allowing you to reposition the working window.

PRESENTATION 99%
Comprehensive instructions and many useful options which are incredibly easy to use.

GRAPHICS 83%
Simpl, but pretty and effective. The colour scheme is entirely up to you . . .

SOUND 71%
The original **Boulderdash** title screen tune and spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 95%
The game is delightfully simple to get into and the construction kit is a joy to use.

LASTABILITY 97%
As many screens as you want, limited only by your imagination.

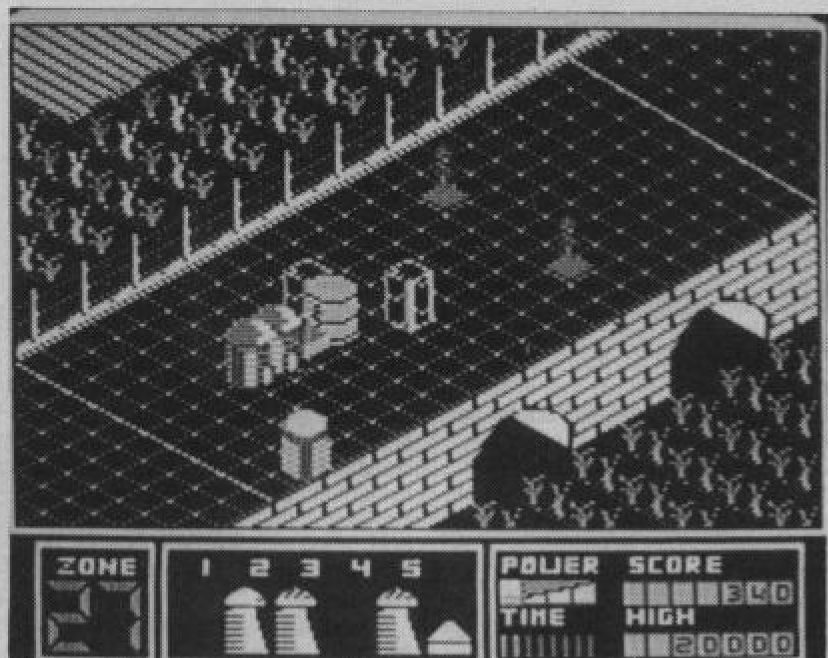
VALUE 97%
Two excellent products for the price of one.

OVERALL 97%
The definitive purchase for **Boulderdash** fans.

ZZAP! TEST

HIGHWAY ENCOUNTER

Gremlin Graphics/Vortex, £7.95 cass, joystick or keys



Earth has once again has aroused the interest of a load of nasty, horrible aliens who have decided that the human race should be exterminated and the planet colonised by their own breed. Just to show that they mean business they've already begun the attack by landing their giant mothership in an attempt to create a 'beach head' for the impending invasion. Bad news, eh?

Well, not quite. An eminent scientist has examined all available data concerning the alien's mothership and has discovered that if it was destroyed the alien's nasty plan would be thwarted and the Earth saved. The only problem is that the only thing capable of destroying the mothership is the newly developed Lasertron, a device which has to be installed within the enemy camp before detonation. You've been assigned the task of transporting the Lasertron to the mothership and have been given five droids to help you complete this world-saving task.

The mothership lies at the end of a long, long road which is split into 30 different zones. Each zone is made up of one screen, and as you go from one to another the screen flicks to show the relevant zone. When the game begins your five droids assemble behind one another at zone 30 and proceed to move down the middle of the road, the Lasertron at the group's forefront. The rearmost droid is put under your direct control and can be rotated in **Asteroids** fashion. Once you've pointed it in the right direction, pressing the accelerate button sends it whizzing forward. By constantly accelerating and decelerating, your droid can be moved anywhere on the screen, as long as there are no obstructions in the way. The rest of the droids remain docile and follow the Lasertron blindly.

To get your entourage through the 30 zones you must clear a path through the obstructions and enemy defences. The obstructions come in the form of barrels and blocks which hinder the Lasertron as it trundles forward. They can be moved out of the way and used to good purpose later on in the game.

Basically there are three types of alien hazard — stationary mines which can be avoided, mobile mines which move backwards and forwards across the road, and soldiers which whizz about the place giving grief whenever and wherever they can. The mines can be dealt with by blocking their path — if you shunt a barrel or block into their path they become trapped and are unable to move. On later levels blocking manoeuvres are made more difficult due to the preset patterns of the mines becoming more complicated, criss-crossing the road and bumping into one another.

There are several types of enemy soldiers, varying from stupid to downright horrible. Most of them rush about the place and only pose a problem if they happen to be heading towards you, others actually home in and try and touch you. If any droid (including a docile one) touches a soldier it explodes, and you have to take a new one from your reserve. Fortunately, the aliens can be blown away with one shot of your laser, although you can only fire bursts of three shots so don't aimlessly blast around — you might find yourself in a situation where you're surrounded by aliens but can't do anything because your laser is recharging.

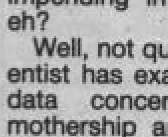
There's a time limit to the game which ticks down as you play. If you fail to get the Lasertron to zone zero before the time limit expires the game ends and the aliens conquer Earth. And you're not going to let that happen . . . are you?



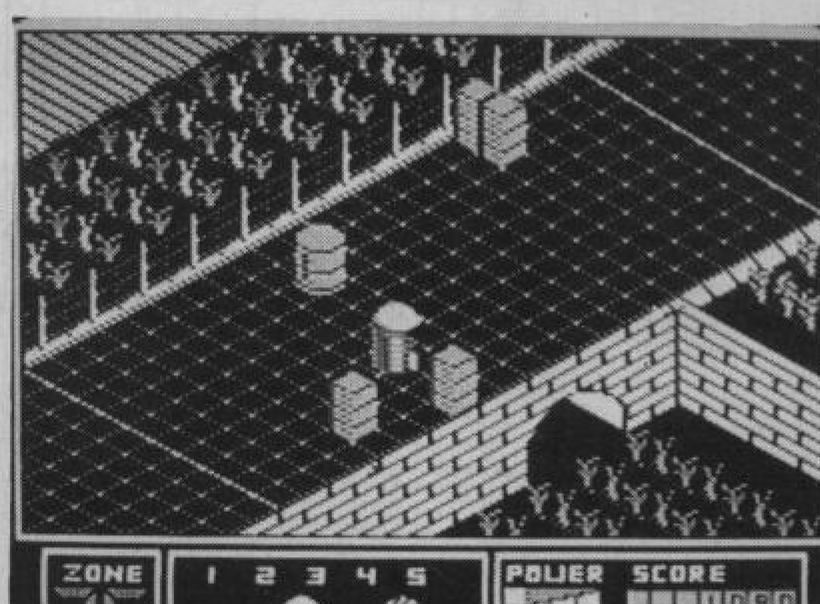
I enjoyed Highway Encounter **quite a bit on the other machines and the 64 version has come well up to scratch in comparison. It does take some time to get into, learning the various tactics and slowly progressing through the levels, but it does prove worthwhile in the end — completing a level leaves you with that smug satisfaction that you've actually done something. A great game that's not an essential buy but certainly worth experiencing.**



Although this appeared well over a year ago on other computer formats, it's still a pretty good game. The 3D works quite well and the game is fast enough to appeal to most shoot em up addicts. As well as shooting things, you also need to use your brain as you try and work out how you're going to block the path of the mines. The graphics and music are of a commendable standard and the game is fun to play. If you like the sound of it give it a try — it's a not awesomely brilliant, but there are loads of worse games available.



There are good and bad points in this game. The sound effects aren't superb but the music is reasonably impressive. The graphics are well drawn but their implementation leads to rare but mildly annoying flicker. Still, these are only minor gripes. Highway Encounter **is an interesting and original idea that works fairly well when played. Nothing dramatic — but nothing catastrophic either.**



PRESENTATION 82%
Useful in-game instructions and demo mode.

GRAPHICS 79%
Effective 3D which unfortunately lacks colour.

SOUND 89%
A great title screen tune, but weak spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 82%
Straightforward gameplay with a very clear objective.

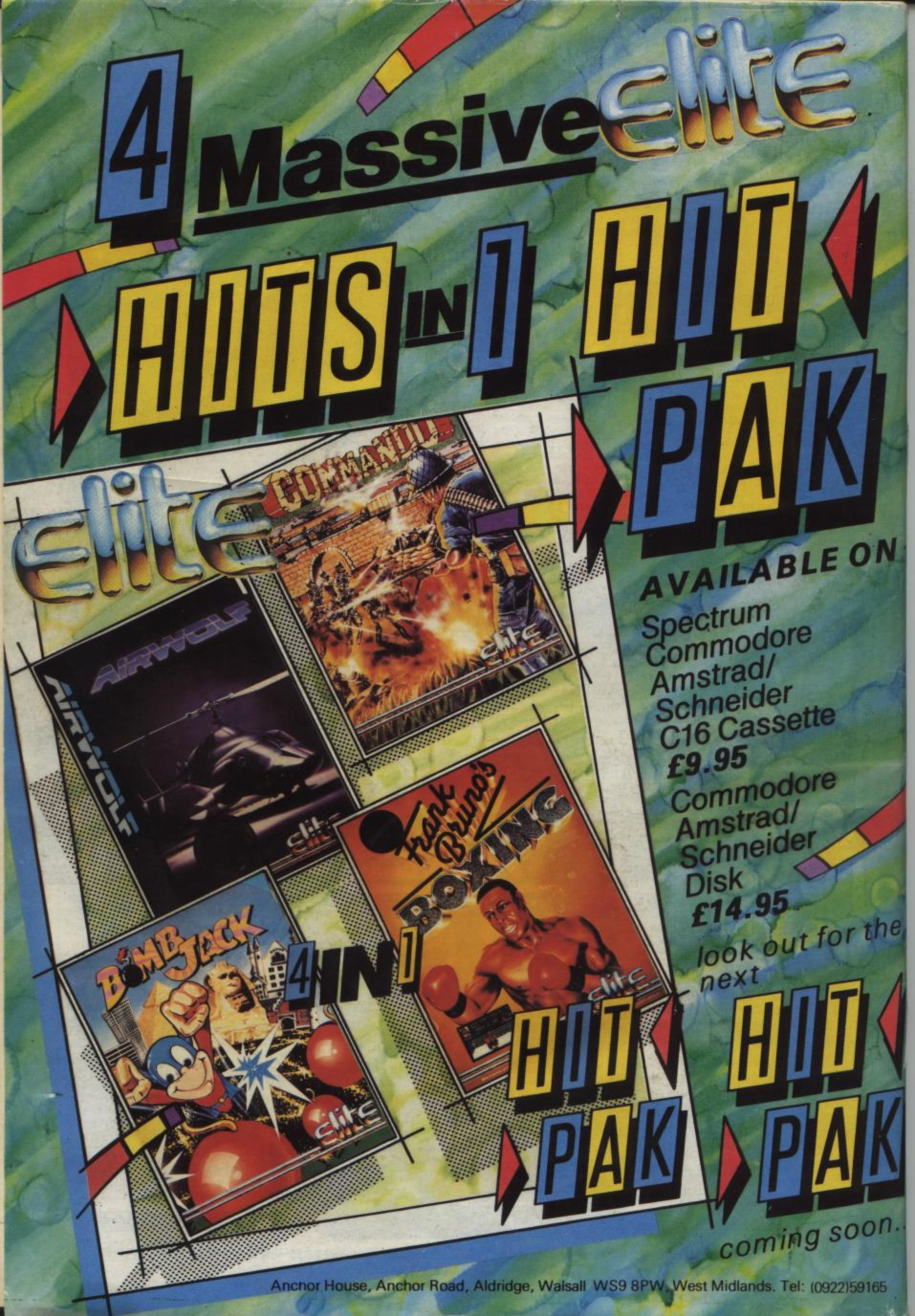
LASTABILITY 73%
The 30 zones will keep you occupied for quite some time.

VALUE 79%
Sensibly priced for what's on offer.

OVERALL 79%
Like a lollipop — far from memorable but enjoyable while it lasts.



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